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A Pilgrimage to Rome.

BY THE

REV. M. HOBART SEYMOUR, M.A.



Seeleys,

FLEET STREET, AND HANOVER STREET.

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LEONARD SEELEY, THAMES DITTON.

THE Author has greatly to regret that this volume has extended far beyond the limits he desired. And his fear of enlarging it too much has induced him to withhold, at least for the present, much that might be regarded as the most interesting portion of his subject.

He was fortunate in forming an intimacy with some of the most influential ecclesiastics at Rome—influential from their station and their learning—and with these he held many conferences and discussions on the practices detailed in this volume; and on the principal points at issue, between the Churches of England and Rome. He had carefully written the details of these conversations at the time, but he has been reluctantly compelled to withhold them, as well as papers on the Catacombs, and on the Church Architecture of Rome, from a fear of extending this volume beyond reasonable limits.

Marlborough Buildings, Bath.

April 27, 1848.

NEW Editions being required, at the same time, both of the “ PILGRIMAGE to ROME ” and of the “ MORNINGS with the JESUITS,” (the supplementary volume, recently published) it has seemed desirable, in order to reduce the inequality of size of the two volumes, to remove two chapters,—that on the *Jesuits*, and that on *Indulgences*, from the PILGRIMAGE, and to transfer them to the other and smaller volume.

London,

Nov. 21, 1849.

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A PILGRIMAGE TO ROME.

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CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE FROM VEVAY. MOTIVES FOR THIS PILGRIMAGE—THE PILGRIMS OF ITALY—THE SCENERY OF ST. MAURICE—WRETCHED STATE OF THE CANTON VALLAIS—THE CAUSES OF THE LATE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT—ECCLESIASTICAL EXEMPTION FROM THE CIVIL LAW—OPPRESSION OF THE PEASANTRY—THE COLLISION AT MARTIGNY—NO PROTESTANT CONNECTED WITH EITHER PARTY—GENERAL CONDITION OF THE CANTON—ASCENT OF THE SIMPLON—VIEW OF THE ALPS—DESCENT BY THE GORGE OF GONDO—FIRST VIEW OF ITALY—ARRIVAL AT BAVENO—LAGO MAGGIORE WITH ITS ISLANDS—A SUNDAY AT MILAN—THE CATHEDRAL—RELICS OF CARLO BORROMEO—THE BRAZEN SERPENT—USES OF THE CATHEDRAL SYSTEM—ITS ORIGIN AND DECLENSION.

A PILGRIMAGE TO ROME.



We had resided for above a month at Lucerne. During that period we made excursions to every part of the lake, the vallies, and the passes of the mountains, while at the same time we had opportunity for observing the first movements—the early workings

of that fearful struggle, which on the following year convulsed the religious and political aspect of Lucerne, and in a measure affected the whole of Switzerland. After leaving that district, we visited the Oberland; and after a fortnight's incessant wanderings among lakes, and mountains, and vallies; among waterfalls, avalanches, and glaciers, and all the varieties of Swiss scenery, we sought the quiet of Vevay, to rest ourselves preparatory to our passing the Alps and descending into Italy.

We remained at Vevay some days. We there learned that the Canton of the Vallies was still uneasy and excited—that the severe lesson that had been taught the people at Martigny some time before, had suppressed the movement, but had not stifled the feeling or moved the causes that had generated it. And as neither the postmasters nor any one else seemed to think themselves bound to render obedience to a government which could not enforce it, we were most strongly urged by the landlord of our hotel to engage horses from a Vetturino to conduct us over the Simplon. We were fortunate in securing one recommended strongly by a friend whom he had already served, and therefore, after arranging for four good and serviceable horses, we prepared for our departure.

It was a bright and beautiful morning in September, 1844. There was not a cloud in the heavens, but far below there was a dense vapour. It was lighted up by the sun, and seemed to gather round the base of the mountains, and to spread itself like a veil over the whole surface of the lake. The lake itself was concealed by this vapour, which lay for some time like a mass of smoke resting on the waters. After a time it gradually rose. The smooth glassy surface began to shew itself beneath the volume of

vapour ; and as it broke into wreaths, and curled, ascending the mountains, it revealed the lake to the sun, and the sun to the lake, till one shone in all its brilliance and the other flashed with light as dazzling and intense. All things gave promise of a fine and glowing day. There was at the same time all the din and bustle of horses, and carriages, and postillions, and porters, and vetturini, going on in the court of our hotel. One carriage has already departed ; a second has followed : and now, our own is at the door. In a few moments we were seated, our servants mounted, the word given, the farewell uttered, and we departed from Vevay.

We soon emerged from the narrow streets, and breathed the fresh air of the mountains. The horses quickened their pace, as if invigorated by the purer atmosphere. The road lay along the margin of the lake ; we soon passed the quiet and sequestered village of Montreux, and the retired and charming village of Clarens. We had been there a few evenings before, and had been wandering about its romantic church-yard. It is beautifully situated : one can look out from beneath its trees and from among its graves, as from some natural terrace, upon one of the finest scenes in Switzerland. It is at a considerable height up the side of the mountains. The broad and glassy lake—the towering mountains—the distant villages—the far-stretching valley of the Rhone—the snowy peaks of the Dent de Midi shooting into the skies,—all these as seen from amidst the solemn associations of the church and the grave—as seen over vineyards purple with clustering grapes—as seen till the gathering twilight gave a deeper and a darker coloring to all—formed one of the most charming and fascinating views we had beheld. We now passed rapidly beneath

the village, and the towers of Chillon were immediately before us. This spot, too, we had already visited, and like other travellers, had explored its prisons and spelled the names of the great and the little, of the wise and the foolish, so inextricably blended together upon the walls. We now soon left Chillon behind us, and still passed on along the edge of the lake. Far away across its waters was seen the village of Meillerie, and straight before us lay the village of Villeneuve, and still we pressed on, till the lake of Geneva was behind us, and the valley of the Rhone before us.

The sun was now rising in its strength above the mountains. The skies were perfectly cloudless, and of a deep and beautiful blue, giving promise of heat. The lake was smooth as a mirror, and reflected every cottage and tree and rock of the mountains that bounded its waters, so vividly, that the line between land and water was scarcely discernible. A few boats were seen, with oars flashing like silver, as they moved along its surface; and there was one little skiff with its white sail, in vain endeavouring to catch a breath of wind; it was perfectly motionless. There was not a breath moving on the waters, and not a solitary ripple broke along the shore as we were passing, and yet there was an air fresh and cool from the mountains, and we breathed it freely, but it seemed not to move so low as to touch the waters. Already however, the lake is behind us, the valley before us, and we have commenced our PILGRIMAGE TO ROME.

The motive to this Pilgrimage was—Religion. Whether for evil or for good, religion has been the master-motive of many a pilgrimage, alike with the Mahomedan, the Jew, and the Christian. Mecca has long asserted a rivalry with

Jerusalem ; and the city of Rome—" the Eternal City "—has opened her gates to as mighty a stream of the pilgrims of religion, as both Mecca and Jerusalem combined. Many are those who, in times past, with eschalop-shell and pilgrim-staff, have crossed the snowy Alps, and have trode their weary way through myrtled paths, and flowery fields, and purpling vineyards, till their wayworn limbs reclined in the Holy City, and their knees bent at " the shrine of the Apostles ;" and bowed their heads and thanked their God for the indulgences and other privileges awarded to so meritorious a pilgrimage. And the motive to all was Religion :—whether for evil or for good, the intention of the pilgrim, the motive to the pilgrimage, was associated with Religion.

Yet others there are now, who, with different views, are year by year pouring in long-continued streams from the Alpine passes, and sweeping through the beautiful plains and beneath the blue skies of Italy, to enjoy its glorious climate, to gaze on its lovely scenes, and to indulge their taste among the sculpture, the paintings, the antiquities, and all the precious mementos of classic ages and Mediæval times. Their young aspirations soar, and their young hearts bound at the prospect before them. They long to tread the scenes where Sylla, Marius, Cato, Pompey, Cæsar walked and swayed the world ; to stand where the Gracchi wielded the fierce democracy, and Cicero charmed a listening senate ; to look on that Capitol where the conquerors of the nations held their councils—that Coliseum where thousands held their fearful and bloody revels—that palace of the Cæsars, where lived the mightiest of men. They long to tread those classic spots, and to pass through those historic scenes that have been graven upon their

hearts by the studies of youth. And onward they speed their way, from the loftiest Alps to the city of Rome, to fulfil their pilgrimage of intellectual pleasure.

It would be affectation in me to say, that nothing of all this mingled with my motives. The hope of looking on those scenes of classic memory, and the desire of seeing the innumerable objects of art, and of standing amidst the historic ruins of the past, not only mingled with, but constituted no inconsiderable element in, the motives that led to my pilgrimage. I should write myself tasteless if it had been otherwise, and I will therefore at once confess, that with me as with others, the desire to visit Genoa and Venice, Florence and Naples—to see the remains of ancient Rome, and the relics of the more ancient Etruria, were mingled with the hopes and wishes that influenced my movements; but still the main idea that occupied my mind, and formed my master-motive was—Religion.

A great religious strife has commenced in England, and the champions on both sides of the contest, are men cherished in the bosom of the English Church.

One of the parties in this struggle loves to appeal to the associations of the past, and especially to those which are connected with the history of the Ancient Church. The appeal, though at first made to the apostolic ages, has been transferred from them, and from the primitive ages of the Church, or days of the early Fathers, to the more valued records of a later age; and every reference in the present phase of the controversy, points to the monuments of the religion of Mediæval Europe. All the ancient architecture that remains to us in England, was the creation of the middle ages; and those only—the gothic churches—which belong the middle ages, and which seem

almost our only relics of the past, are admired, praised, venerated. And as all their associations are with a Roman ritual, a Roman priesthood, and a Roman religion—as they were raised and arranged, in their chief details, to suit the ecclesiastical system of Rome, so they seem to some minds, that are influenced by association, to be naked and effete without that system to which they were devoted. And this has led some persons to sigh for our reconciliation to Rome, or at least to lament the necessity for our present separation. It is in somewhat the same way, that a taste for music has influenced others to a similar inclination. The Gregorian chants—the noble masses of Mozart and others—indeed, the finest music we possess, is associated with the ceremonies, the services, and the sacraments of the Roman religion. There are many persons, lovers of music, who feel a religious repugnance to frequent the opera, or such places of musical entertainment, and who yet sigh for some opportunity of hearing the masterpieces of the art. It is this that has led so many to love the services of our cathedrals; attending them less to hear the minister than to hear the musician, and less to worship God than to admire the performance. Such persons persuade themselves that a musical service is a devotional service, and that this devotion is in proportion to the quantity and quality of the music. The result is, that the transition to the Roman service, in which all is ceremony, and in which all may be music, soon becomes an easy and natural transition, with the lovers of sacred harmony. A taste for painting has naturally produced a similar effect. In all the greatest triumphs of the pencil, it has been consecrated to the church of Rome. Her saints, her monks, her nuns, her martyrs, her popes, are ever foremost on the

canvas. The greatest masters, Beato Angelico, Perugino, Raphael, &c. lived before the light of the Reformation was fully developed, and as all the subjects they painted were those of a mediæval religion, so, as often as they are seen, they suggest the ideas of that mediæval religion : and those alone who have experienced it, can form an adequate conception of the power of such associations on the minds of those who have a real feeling for painting. It is in very much the same process, that a taste for the romances and legends of the middle ages, is now acting on the minds of many. They recal the memories of knights devoting themselves to the cloister to atone for the past, and of ladies retiring among the sisters of some nunnery to weep over disappointed love ;—of kings and queens founding such establishments in order to atone for the sins of the palace by the ceremonies of the cloister ;—and all clothed in some vestments of romance, which will ever exert an influence on the minds of those whose temperaments and tastes are of that peculiar tendency. These all are giving their influence to the present movement, and armed with all these weapons, one of the two great parties in the religious strife of the day enters on the conflict.

Antagonist to this is a far different spirit. It seems in its nature simplicity itself, existing without much detail, or variety of ceremonial, or pageantry, or display, and appearing to live and to derive all its power from an innate divinity that seems to possess it. It is not altogether without its associations, but they are such as are little calculated to impress the tastes, or work on the sympathies of the romantic, the imaginative, or the young. It demands a sterner separation from the world, and a purer holiness to the Lord than suits the tendencies of some. But it has

its associations with the life of Jesus Christ—with the scenes where he walked—with the words that he spake—with the sorrows he felt—the tears that he wept—the sufferings he endured—and the death he died. And it seems to live on that deep and enduring love, that brought him from the fields of heaven, to tread our fallen world, and to feed upon all the precious promises to which his lips gave utterance, and upon all the purposes of mercy to which his mission witnesses. And all this has a power to subdue, and soften, and melt the heart, and win it to holiness, though perhaps possessing little to captivate the natural taste. It has associations too with those times when Mediæval darkness was scattered by the discovery of the art of printing—by the consequent and natural revival of literature—by the spread of knowledge, and by the printing, circulating and reading of the Holy Scriptures. Breaking forth upon the darkness and ignorance of the middle ages, like a sun bursting upon a long-slumbering world, the discovery of printing, the revival of literature, and the circulation of the scriptures, asserted a place for themselves in the history of human enlightenment, and have stamped the era of the Reformation of religion, as, next to that of the appearing of the Messiah, the most truly glorious in the records of our race. And all this is so intimately associated with the spirit or principle we are describing, that it invests it with much of enlightened interest. There are other associations too, though of a sadder and a darker kind, connected with those holy men, who, in the strength of their deep convictions, renounced all the charms of life, and all the ambition of the world, to follow the steps of their Saviour, and to traverse the world as the heralds of salvation ; and who, borne upwards and onwards

in their holy career, by a power that belonged not to man, withstood a world in arms, and bore with meekness the chains of the prison-house, and embraced with rejoicing the flames of martyrdom. It is well and merciful that God has held back these sterner trials from our feebler christianity, but the memories of these holy men, still faithful in their shrouds of flame—faithful to the word of scripture—faithful to the cause of Christ—may well be cherished in our hearts, and be felt as an association of surpassing interest, to those who possess that light of which the dying martyr proclaimed “it should never be extinguished in England.” These, it is true, are thrilling associations, and many more might be added; but they are associations appealing to the judgment rather than to the imagination, and to the feelings rather than to the taste. The great principle with which they are connected, is too much fraught with deep and holy lessons of piety and purity, assailing with unflinching sternness the sins of our nature, humbling and narrowing our natural self-love, and ever pointing to a holiness almost beyond human aspiring, to be popular with the masses of mankind. It deals with the realities of the present, rather than with the dreams of the past, and therefore possesses, far less than its antagonist principle, the elements and associations that please the imagination and the taste. It relies on the deductions of divine truth, rather than on the creations of human poetry,—it is the religion of reality rather than the religion of taste.

These are the two rival principles in conflict at the present day within the bosom of the Church of England. The spirit of Romanism desires to mould us after the model of the middle ages. The spirit of Protestantism would

lead us to conform to the simplicity of the Holy Scriptures. The former revels among the legends of the Breviary ; the latter loves to dwell upon the words of Scripture. One would throw the shackles of authority over the mind, and bring it back to the state and subjection of the past. The other would give the fullest freedom, and beckon the mind onwards to the future. One regards every fresh ray of light as an innovation ; the other hails it as a means of newer discoveries. One emphatically retards advancement ; the other earnestly promotes it. And so too with their respective votaries ;—learning, and piety, and zeal, and the best intentions may belong to both, but one is determined by his taste, the other by his judgment. One lives in a reverie, and the other in reality.

This conflict has been disturbing the peace of the Church of England for several years. It has induced a state of things fraught with both difficulty and danger, and offering special temptations to persons of peculiar tendencies. And accordingly among the members of the Church of England, there has arisen within the last few years, a weary and unsettled spirit—a restless and wandering spirit. It seems to occupy itself in some vague and mystic dream of the imagination, and the minds of its victims seem unaccountably filled and swayed by yearnings for the realization of some mental conception—some idea—some phantasy, which, from the very nature of things, is incapable of being realized. Like those who sigh for the visitings of the shade of some departed friend, they sigh for that which is incapable of accomplishment. Yet they still sigh on ; like the visions of delirium, this phantasy is constantly changing. It seems at times to be a Temple, whose lofty arches and stately columns—whose aisles and sanctuaries are

fashioned in the fairest symmetry and finest proportions of architecture ; and they call it THE CHURCH. It seems at other times to assume the dim and dark forms of more than gothic antiquity, invested with all that is venerable in years, and encrusted with the relics of other and remoter times ; and they call it, THE FATHERS. Again, it assumes some new form, and seems moulded into some long and unbroken chain, whose golden links extend themselves into the unpenetrated depths of the past, connecting the past with the present, and destined to connect the present with the future ; and they call it TRADITION. Ever dwelling in the mind and flitting in the imagination, and ever varying according to the peculiarities of the physical and mental conformation of those persons, this conception—this idea—this phantasy, has hurried its victims towards the first claimant, to the loudest pretender—to that which claims and pretends to be the very realization of all. And like those, who believing in the promises of the Alchymists, flung their all into the crucible of the first or loudest pretender to the mystic science, only to find themselves deceived and ruined,—so have these admirers of “an ideal of a Church” flung their body, soul and spirit—their all, into the arms of the Church of Rome. It will be terrible when the awakening comes.

It was in the midst of this state of things, that I resolved on a visit to Rome—the city of the Church called “Catholic ;” to see and judge for myself whether the real was at all answerable to the ideal—to witness her ceremonies—to attend her services—to observe her worship—to inspect her convents—to converse with her priesthood, and to judge for myself respecting the moral and religious results of her system.

It was with this view we departed from Vevay, and commenced our pilgrimage to Rome. We were pilgrims, however, very different from those who bear that name in Italy. These are usually the very lowest of the population, who, loving a roving life, rather than a life of labor, wander gipsy-like from district to district: and being fertile in invention, and expert in narrating stories, are ever welcome at the hearth and at the table of the Italian peasant. The great majority of them recal to mind the sturdy beggar of Ireland, or the canny gaberlunize of Scotland; they belong to that class by birth, by habits, and by taste. But it is a marked characteristic of Italy, that everything must be connected with religion; so that as, in England, a rogue will assume the garb of some wounded and destitute sailor, to move the hearts of the people,—in Italy he usually assumes that of a pilgrim, as most calculated to ensure success. These men undertake a pilgrimage from convent to monastery, and from city to village, and are universally recognised by their dress. Those who are particular in their outward appearance, often permit the beard to grow till it hangs in patriarchal length upon the breast. The large loose dress of the Capuchin monks, or of some other order, is generally adopted, according to the taste or the convenience of the pilgrim, who is influenced in this by whatever convent it may be where he may have been able to secure the cast-off garb of a monk. And this is of some importance to him: as any insult or injury to him while wearing this dress, like an insult to a national flag, would be vindicated by the weight and influence of the Order,—a wrong to one wearing the dress of an order, being regarded as a wrong done to the Order itself. Over the shoulder of the pilgrim is a

large pellerine, usually made of oil-cloth, not unlike that worn by the Police of London, to protect them from the inclemency of the weather ; and on this there are often affixed two large eschalop shells, one on each breast, with two others on the shoulders behind ; and sometimes when the pilgrim is foppish as well as devout, there is a row of small eschalop shells, arranged as an ornamental fringe or border carried all round the pellerine. The hat has a leaf so large that when left to fall open, it protects from the sun and the rain alike ; and when fastened at the side becomes either a gipsy-shape, or Leghorn bonnet, or a most clerical hat, according to the fancy of the wearer, or the state of the weather. In the right hand there is a strong pilgrim-staff, which reminds one of that of Friar Tuck ; while under his left arm there is a large umbrella, usually of the most flaming crimson ; and in this singular fashion moves the modern Pilgrim of Italy. At least we have seen very many of whom this description is the type ; some of them obtain a living by visiting distant shrines, and performing certain penances, and attending privileged stations, as proxies for those who are unable or unwilling themselves to perform them. But there are many others, not of the class of pilgrims, but simple and believing peasants, who travel their little pilgrimage to some favourite shrine, or privileged church, or miraculous image ; congregating to every place and at every season, when and where any special festival of religion is holding ; and especially in the city of Rome, where special privileges are accorded to them during the services of the holy week.

After entering the valley of the Rhone we rapidly approached St. Maurice. There is a wide breadth of valley between the mountains for some distance, but it greatly

narrows or contracts near St. Maurice. The mountains approach and close on each other;—a deep and narrow gorge is all that divides them; it seems like a rent or fissure made by the rush of waters; and though in this place the mountains have not the grandeur, and the pass has not the gloominess, and the rocks have not the savage character of many another scene in Switzerland, yet there are antique-looking towers and embattled walls, and combined with the natural beauties of the pass, the effect of all was strikingly picturesque. We walked through it and about it for above an hour, so as to see it in every point of view. It is slightly fortified, the Rhone rushes foaming through it; one noble arch is flung high over the chasm. We crossed it and entered the canton Vallais.

And now we were wandering beside “the blue waters of the arrowy Rhone.” It was only a few weeks before, that we had stood upon that vast field of ice and snow, in the far mountains where the river takes its first beginning. We had ascended the pass of the Grimsel, and standing on the narrow ridge above the Hospice, we looked down upon a narrow thread of water working its way along the valley. It was the mountain source of the Aar, which, sweeping through the vallies and among the mountains, bursts forth in that most beautiful of waterfalls—the falls at Handek—and still sweeping on through the passes and lakes of Switzerland, adds its waters to the Rhine, and so all pour their flood into the German Ocean. And then as we looked down upon the valley at the other side of the ridge, we could discern another stream, looking small and thin in the distance, threading its way through the wild and rugged scene, after first gushing from beneath that noble object—that icy fountain of waters, the Glacier of the

Rhone. This little stream was the beginning of that fine and magnificent river, which, flowing through the Lake of Geneva, and the loveliest scenes of France, pours its flood of waters into the bosom of the Mediterranean. That rocky ridge was "the dividing of the waters" of the Rhine and the Rhone.

And here, many a mile from its source in the glaciers, we saw it a broad, deep, and rapid river. It is not easy to stand unmoved among such scenes, and we cannot wonder that the constant sight of the ice melting into drops of water—the water gathering into a little stream—the stream struggling among rocks—the water at first held back, then swelling and foaming over its obstacles—the stream becoming a torrent, at one time dashing in all the fury of the waterfall, and at another sleeping in some calm and tranquil basin; now rushing in foam and roar over resisting rocks, and now flowing gently and peacefully along; at one time black and dark in some gloomy and shadowy recess, and at another flashing and sparkling in the sunshine of heaven, now weak and thin at its first beginnings, and now broad and mighty in its after-course, till after many and long alterations, it seeks and finds its home and destiny in the ocean; we cannot, I say, wonder that the constant sight of such scenes should have so deeply impressed a mind of such mystic tendencies as Madame Guion, and withal one so deeply imaginative. She was struck with the parallel in the course of the inward life, the spiritual life of the soul. It is weak at the first,—and receiving strength as it goes, it struggles with many an opposing influence,—and now seems retarded, stopped,—but still renewing its strength, it prevails and still advances,—at one time amidst many an inward struggle,

at another in calm and sweet tranquillity, and still advances, now in deep gloom and darkness, and now again in the fulness of peace and joy; and still advances, at one time weak and faint, and at another strong and irresistible; till at last it enters the vast eternity, and finds its home in the heavenly and better land.

From the moment we left St. Maurice, we observed a change—a change so marked as not to escape observation even from the least observant—in the social state or character of the country. The villages were wretchedly poor and dirty; the cottages were marked with every trace of an impoverished and beggarly people; the persons of the peasantry wore the aspect of neglect and destitution; the children were half-naked, and wholly squalid with rags and filth, and matted hair; the fields were in the most negligent state as to cultivation: everything wore the appearance of a condition so inferior in comfort, order, cleanliness, and substantial enjoyment—so impoverished and destitute, that contrasted with the state of the canton Vaud, it made a strange impression upon us. In no other part of Switzerland, even in its most barren and unproductive valleys, had we witnessed such wretchedness and misery as characterized this region, and it seemed rendered the more striking by its contrast with the thriving, industrious, independent appearance of the neighbouring region. There seems a century of difference, between the canton Vaud, and the canton Vallais; and yet they are divided only by the waters of the Rhone, and united by the bridge of St. Maurice.

There must be a cause for this. It is often contended that the cause of this difference is to be found in the facts that the canton Vaud is a Protestant canton, and that the

canton Vallais is a Roman Catholic canton. To justify this opinion, it is usual to refer to the several cantons of Switzerland, among which the fact must be freely acknowledged by all candid travellers, that those cantons which are Protestant, are incomparably more comfortable, independent, wealthy and prosperous, than those which are Roman Catholic. They are incomparably more advanced in all that constitutes modern civilization. I have visited almost every canton, and I am bound in all honesty and candour, and in despite of every charge of narrow-mindedness or bigotry or prejudice, to give my testimony to the fact, that in all the comfort, the industry, the independence and the education which constitute modern civilization, the cantons which are Protestant are far in advance of those that are Roman Catholic.

But though all this be undoubtedly true, and may be noticed by the least observant traveller, yet it is not all the truth. We must be careful not to mistake the cause for the effect, or the effect for the cause. It may be that the superior civilization of some cantons is *the cause* of the Protestantism, and not the *result* of it; and that the inferior condition of others is *the cause* of the Romanism, and not its *result*. If a people be a thriving, industrious, independent, educated and free people, they will think, and read, and judge for themselves, as freely on religion as on every thing else; and thus the tendency among them will be to shake off the trammels of a priesthood, claiming peculiar privileges and mysterious powers; and so the tendency of the public mind, in an educated and civilized canton, would be towards Protestantism. And again, if a people living in mountain regions and remote valleys, are, from that very circumstance, more removed than those who

live on the plains and nearer valleys, from education and the march of civilization ; such a people, uneducated and uncivilized, are naturally wedded to their old habits and antiquated notions ; they are impregnable to the march of improvement, and so continue in Romanism because they continue in their unenlightened and uncivilized state ; and thus their absence of civilization seems a *cause* of their Romanism, and not an effect of it. All this ought to be taken into consideration, when it is recollected that the civilized plains and more accessible valleys are chiefly Protestant ; while the mountain regions and more remote valleys are more generally Romish.

This, however, reasonable as it is, will not account satisfactorily for the state of the several cantons. It deserves to be held in mind, and to have its degree of influence, though by no means adequate for all the difficulty. And a thinking man is compelled to acknowledge that Protestantism and Romanism, if not altogether, yet in a large measure, must be recognised as one of the causes of so marked a contrast in the respective cantons. Such a conclusion, so far from being a bigoted notion, as some will regard it, is no more than is justified by common sense, and the experience of mankind ; for as Romanism bases itself on ancient opinions and antique customs, and lives as it were by prescription and tradition from the days of our fathers, so it has a tendency in its very nature to confirm and retain old habits and old feelings, and thus far to resist the march of improvement as the progress of innovation. On the other hand Protestantism flings aside much that is merely antiquated and obsolete, as the customs and opinions of dark and ignorant ages ; and claiming for every man a right from nature and from God, to think and judge for

himself—claiming for every man a freedom of opinion, by which to judge of all things, the very tendency of Protestantism is to open the door and clear the way to improvement and consequent civilization. This question is in no degree a mere question of dogmas or discipline, of doctrines or customs. It is the political and civilizing tendency of the two great master-principles that rule the human family. One, in love with the mysteries of past ages, surrounded with all the associations of the tales of other years, and worshipping ever the fetters of antiquity, has assumed the name of Romanism ; the other, employing the past to improve the present, and casting off its ancient fetters, claiming freedom for the mind, and wooing the opening glories of the future, has assumed the name of Protestantism. These two mighty spirits have each their votaries, and the tendency of one is to look into the past and retard the steps of improvement ; while the tendency of the other is to look into the future, and advance the march of civilization. The former spirit reigns in the canton Vallais. The latter triumphs in the canton Vaud.

We found the valleys, as we had reason to expect from previous information, in a state of great excitement, on a subject that fully accounted for their desolate and uncivilized condition. The people were still stunned under the failure of an abortive attempt at reform or revolution, as various minds would regard it ; and there seemed among them a dark and sullen feeling, mingled with great excitement, as to a disaster that shortly before had befallen their high hopes. The subject interested me, and so much the more, as I had been totally misled by the statements of our English papers respecting the movement.

I ascertained on enquiry, that the people complained of

three evils, and the object of the movement was, to find a remedy for these.

The first cause of complaint was the exemption of ecclesiastical persons from the civil tribunals. The whole ecclesiastical or religious body of priests, monks, and nuns, are held, or believed by the people to be held, exempt from the penalties which attach by the civil laws to all other persons, and amenable only to the ecclesiastical laws. It appears, that throughout the canton of the Vallies, the ecclesiastical body is paramount in influence, and supreme in power ; its members claim a separate jurisdiction and a separate code, so that, whatever their actions may be, they are exempt from the ordinary civil tribunals, and amenable only to the ecclesiastical tribunals. So far is this carried, that the peasantry state, that any of the laity who may have made himself liable to the civil law, has only to repair to a convent and assume the cowl as a lay-brother, and then he becomes liable only to the ecclesiastical law. The whole body of the population exclaim loudly against this, as interfering with the stream of justice ; and feeling themselves, whether rightly or wrongly I cannot say, oppressed and spoiled—feeling that the priests and monks are constantly perpetrating acts of the grossest character—feeling that the sufferers have no adequate redress, from being unable to bring them before the civil tribunal—feeling that bringing ecclesiastics before their own tribunals, where ecclesiastics are the law-makers and the judges, will bring little or no punishment on the delinquent ecclesiastic, and little or no redress to the complaining laic—feeling all this, the people have demanded that all persons ecclesiastical or laic shall be alike subject to the civil law, and alike tried before the civil tribunals for their crimes.

The second cause assigned for the movement, was the desired suppression of the convents. The whole population of the canton of the Vallies is Roman Catholic, and therefore this movement against the convents did not arise from those unhappy animosities of rival religionists that agitate other scenes. It arose from the laity feeling that the conventual body—the priests and monks, were too numerous and powerful ; and from their universal feeling—though whether right or wrong I cannot say—that the priests and monks were constantly perpetrating acts of wrong, injustice, and oppression, against which there was no satisfactory redress, as the delinquents were amenable only to their own body, who with one voice, would justify any claim or exaction made by one of themselves. It was also stated that they were compelled to forbear to work on the too numerous holidays, and that of their working-days they were obliged to give many to work on the lands of the convent without any remuneration. It was distinctly stated, in answer to my inquiries, that one of their numerous monks may assault one of the people—may seize the property of one of the laity—may commit outrage even on a female, and then when brought before the ecclesiastical tribunals, where the brothers or monks of his order are the judges, he is tolerably sure of the extreme of leniency, if not a full acquittal. This cause of complaint has a strong hold of the popular mind, and therefore, though wholly members of the Church of Rome, they demand the suppression of the convents, proposing to convert them into hospitals for those terrible diseases, the goitre and cretinism, so prevalent in the Vallies, and so destructive of the health and the lives of the population.

The third cause of agitation is—Education. The igno-

rance of the population of this canton is so prevalent, that in whole villages it is frequently found that no more than two or three persons are able to read or write; and this, notwithstanding the number of convents, and the multitude of monks and nuns, who ought to devote themselves to the task of imparting education, and who seem at least to have no more fitting or useful employment. The small amount of instruction that is imparted in some of the convents, is said to be of such a nature that the people, though rigid Roman Catholics, demand that it shall be taken out of their hands, and established on a broader and more liberal basis. And in order to this, they propose the appropriation of some of the monastic possessions to the maintenance of a useful system of education. As to the justice or injustice of the opinion and feelings of the people on this subject, I am wholly incompetent to form a judgment, and happily my present business is not to state my own personal views, but to give a faithful record of the opinions and feelings that are working in the minds of the people, and that have led to the movement referred to.

These are the three leading questions now agitating the minds of the population. The government of the canton is in the hands of the priests and monks, and the few who are under their influence. The military force of the canton is therefore also in the hands of their party. And being in possession of the civil and military power, and having also the greater portion of the property of the canton in their hands, they are regarded as an "aristocratic or clerical party;" while the friends of the movement are regarded as a "democratic" or lay party.

This latter party have lately received a great and terrible check. The circumstances were narrated to us by one

residing near the spot where the tragical scene was transacted. It had been resolved by the peasantry of the vallies above Martigny, to assemble and proceed to St. Maurice on a given day. It was supposed that their object was to make a demonstration of their strength, and as they were unarmed, it was apprehended that their purpose might be to seize on the arms of the authorities, deposited in the arsenal in that place. Accordingly, the aristocratic or monkish party, concealed during the night a body of soldiers, with some monks, in a deep cleft or chasm in the cliffs on the road-side near Martigny. In this place they lay perfectly concealed, and as the mass of peasants passed on, this force fired from their concealment a deadly volley, which took fatal effect on the dense body of the people. These were taken wholly by surprise, and being unarmed, neither made nor could make any resistance. They fled in every direction, leaving many of their number, both men and women, dead or dying behind them. My informant was a Roman Catholic, and he expressed great indignation, while stating that the monks, issuing with the soldiers from their concealment, allowed them to rifle and strip the dead, and kill the wounded, and refused "the last rites of the Church," or as my informant expressed it, "the consolations of their religion," to those who were dying; while they blessed the soldiers in their dreadful work, and then sprinkled them with "Holy Water," to purify them. This tragedy dwelt vividly in the minds of the whole population, during our visit to these vallies; and while it gave a perfect triumph to the priests and monks, it seemed to have sunk deep into the thoughts of the peasants, and to have implanted there the purpose of a dark and terrible revenge.

It is impossible for a mere traveller to form a judgment

to be much depended on, upon the political parties of those districts through which he passes; I therefore express none, but I cannot forbear as a Christian man—a follower of Jesus Christ—to say that which will find a response in every generous mind of every religion under heaven—that the conduct of the monks, who refused “the last rites of the church” to the dying peasantry on that dreadful day, believing, as they profess to believe, that the salvation of their immortal souls in eternity depended on those rites, and that damnation in Hell was the certain consequence of the refusal,—was conduct that deserves no better epithets than that of diabolical and fiendish. It was making themselves the willing ministers of Satan; helping him, as far as in them lay, to damn the souls of the people! A minister of Christ would have tried to save them. A minister of Satan would have tried to damn them. The monks of the Vallais adopted the latter course!

One point, however, to me one of great importance and interest, I was enabled to ascertain satisfactorily. Namely, —that *there was not a single Protestant involved in either of the two parties in collision in the Canton.* This fact interested me the more, as it had been stated in the English newspapers, that the affair was a collision between the Protestants and the Romanists; as if it was either a religious or political Protestantism that was raising disturbance or coming into collision with the authorities of the canton. On the contrary, it was a collision between the Roman Catholic laity and the Roman Catholic priesthood. The great body of the peasantry—and no other inhabitants of the Vallais can bear any other name except the inmates of the convents—felt themselves aggrieved and oppressed by the priests and monks. They stated to us that they were often beaten

and insulted, and could obtain no redress ; that they were compelled to forbear from work and honest labor, on a vast number of holy-days, too many for the wants of their families ; that they were obliged to give a large number of their working-days, and those often the most important for themselves, to labor on the lands of the convents without any wages or remuneration, to the neglect of their own lands ; and that they were resolved to find a remedy for such wrongs and oppressions. It was thus altogether a conflict between the Roman Catholic laity and the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics. Protestantism had no concern in it ; there are not a dozen Protestants in the whole Valley. The government being in the hands of Romish Ecclesiastics, the religion of Protestants is not tolerated in the canton. And thus this struggle is the struggle of a Roman Catholic people against the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics ; not to change their religion, not to alter a single article of doctrine, but to put an end to the unjust oppressions which they suffer at the hands of the priests, monks, and other ecclesiastics, who possess all the best houses and the best portion of the property of the canton, and who are in fact the only aristocracy of the canton Vallais.

The same remark is in some respect applicable to the movements in the canton of Lucerne. During a residence of one month in that canton, we were much impressed by the feeling of unmitigated hatred against the Jesuits entertained by the Roman Catholic laity. The feeling was not universal ; but it was very general and was in no degree disguised ; and the movement against the Jesuits, which burst forth shortly after we had left Lucerne, was the movement of Roman Catholics exclusively. The whole population of the canton, with the exception of about three

or four hundred, is Roman Catholic, and the movement arose among them against the proposed measure of the party in power, which proposed placing education in the hands of the Jesuits. This movement, wholly originating with Roman Catholics, and maintained exclusively by them, was sympathised in by the Protestants of other cantons. This led to what some regarded as a rash and unjust interference of other cantons in the internal affairs of Lucerne. And this interference compelled all the population of Lucerne, whether the advocates or the opponents of the Jesuits, to make common cause against external interference. The movement *against* Lucerne was a Protestant movement, but the original movement *within* the canton—a movement against the Jesuits, was altogether a Roman Catholic movement. And it is deeply to be regretted, both for the sake of truth and for the sake of the parties concerned, that it should have been described in a different light and as of a different character, in so many of the journals in England. It was a gross injustice to the bold and manly, though unsuccessful, stand made by so large a body of the Roman Catholics of Lucerne against the Jesuits, to deprive them of the praise they deserve, by describing it as a movement of Protestants. It was essentially a movement arising from a love of freedom among the Roman Catholics of the canton.

But to return. Throughout the whole extent of the valley of the Rhone, i. e., through this whole canton of the Vallies, from St. Maurice to Sion, there are the evidences, plain and palpable, of an oppressed and ill-governed people. It is true that much of the neglected and ill-cultivated state of the land, the destitute and impoverished state of the peasants, and the dirty and

wretched state of the villages, may be ascribed to an ungenial soil and an unhealthy climate. But this cannot account for much that forces itself on the notice, even of an unobservant visitor. There are other vallies, as the upper and lower Simmenthal, the valley of Glarus, &c., that naturally are as poor in soil and as ungenial in climate, and are more remote from civilization, and they yet present an incomparably more cultivated, thriving, and prosperous condition; one that contrasts strikingly with the state of this valley of the Rhone, and forces the impression on the mind that there is much that is wrong, sadly and fatally wrong, in the government of this canton. Whether the opinion of the people is right or wrong, in attributing it to the government being in the hands of the ecclesiastics—whether the opinion be justified of those who ascribe it to the chief property of the vallies being in the possession of convents—or whether the judgment be wrong which ascribes it to the prevalence of Romanism, demanding the observance of too many holidays, and checking the growth of mind—whether any of these opinions be right or wrong, it is certain that there is an evil somewhere. And for one, I cannot wonder that the simple inhabitants, unacquainted with the politics and political schemes that are at work in other lands, should attribute all their evils to that which presses most nearly and most visibly upon them—namely the extent, the power, and oppressive spirit of the ecclesiastics, whose numerous convents possess all the best houses and finest properties; and therefore exert all the influence and power of the State. There is no telling the number of priests, monks, and nuns, that reside in this region.

The scenery throughout is very fine; inferior indeed to

many of the magnificent vallies of Switzerland, but still very fine. It is however characterized by sameness; though in some places, as St. Maurice and Sion, nothing could surpass the picturesque character of the scenes. Sion has the rather doubtful honour of being the most picturesque and at the same time the most filthy town in all the vallies of Switzerland. It is exquisite at a distance, it is horrible on a closer acquaintance. Brieg seems more bright and showy and prosperous, and looks like a town of churches and colleges and convents. The Jesuits have an extensive establishment in it; indeed all the best houses and the largest properties in this canton Vallais belong to the religious orders, who thus constitute the aristocracy of the canton; and who seem—like the aristocracies of some other countries—to regard the social, physical and political advancement of the peasantry, as trenching on their peculiar privileges; and therefore hope to maintain their own ascendancy by the oppression of others.

After passing two days in the valley of the Rhone, we proposed ascending the pass of the Simplon. We started early and had the promise of the finest weather; and therefore proceeded with the most cheerful anticipations; nor were we disappointed.

On facing the mountain, as it towers over the town of Brieg, I was thoroughly perplexed to ascertain how and where it was possible to ascend. There rose the vast masses of mountain, forming a continuous ridge, like a mighty barrier utterly inaccessible to man; and of which the lowest point seemed not less than many thousand feet in height; while the part which we faced in order to ascend, seemed to me so precipitous as to be impossible of access. I had been for some time carefully observing the

face of the mountain-range, and was examining it to discern any direction in which a road might possibly be carried. At a little distance there appeared a ravine, seeming to cut deep into the mountains, and flanked on one side by noble precipices ; and I expected the ascent would lead along this, perhaps winding gradually along the ravine, and as gradually ascending the height. But as for the mountain itself, which stood right before us, it seemed as if a bird might fly over it, or a dog or a goat ascend ; and even an experienced chamois-hunter might possibly succeed in the ascent with great exertion and many a narrow escape ; but I no more conceived it possible that our carriage could be drawn up that wonderful height, than I could have expected it to ascend the dome of St. Paul's : it might pass through it, but could never pass over it. But while looking intently in various directions for some available pass, the road appeared, winding and coiling itself around this very mountain ; and steadily ascending, now working its way through an alpine forest clothing the mountain-side, and then traversing the verge of terrific precipices : at one time winding among enormous rocks, and through long galleries or tunnels cut in the solid rocks, and at another, over rushing torrents and even under the leap of a waterfall ; but still gradually ascending, at one moment buried in the shade of forests of stately pines, and at the next stealing along the face of gigantic cliffs, but still ascending at the slowest foot-pace for nearly eight hours, till we had attained the highest level of the pass.

In ascending, from the valley of the Rhone, this pass of the Simplon, there are some points of view that rival any to be found on any other of the passes of the Alps. The gorge or ravine of the Saltine, along the verge of which

the road is in some places carried, and the hanging glaciers above, are very fine in their way ; though certainly they are inferior to scenes on the Splügen and the Stelvio, which we have since visited ; but there is nothing in any pass, superior in beauty, in grandeur and singularity combined, to the view of the Alps—the Bernese Oberland, and other mountains that lie on the opposite side of the Valley of the Rhone ; mountain after mountain cleaves the blue heavens, robed in the most pure and unbroken snows, and looking as if the snows had never felt the sun, or the wind, or the rain, since the hour of their creation. There they stand with their pointed peaks, as yet untouched by any living thing, seeming too lofty even for the wing of the eagle, or the vulture of the Alps. Somewhat lower around their bases lie those glorious glaciers—wide and pathless seas of ice—those fountains of the Rhine and the Rhone, that seem in some places like mighty rivers circling around the mountains, frozen in their course, and yet pouring their ice-flood into valleys so lofty, as to be inaccessible to human footsteps. Somewhat lower still is the region of huge rocky cliffs, and gloomy gorges, and overhanging precipices, looking like the inaccessible barriers of another world. While, lower still, all becomes beautiful with verdure, and rich with foliage of a thousand hues, in that noble valley, with its towers, its convents, its churches, and its spires, shooting above the dark foliage of its forests. It is a wonderful scene ; the snowy peaks above, the glorious glaciers beneath, all resting over the green and luxuriant valley, form a view, that for real grandeur and true sublimity has no superior in its kind, among all the passes of the Alps.

The descent into Italy, after a long and uninteresting

level, is by the gorge of Gondo. It forms a striking contrast in many particulars to the scenery of the ascent while it is incomparably more attractive to some tastes. This gorge it is impossible to describe: It is a vast cleft or ravine in the mountains, and as the road passes along its highest verge, the eye is strained to fathom its depths. At intervals there is seen, far—far below, a thin thread of water, stealing along its dim and shadowy depths, and a narrow pathway is faintly traceable beside the stream. So distant is this in the deep, deep recesses of the gorge, and so immediately under us, from the precipitous nature of the sides of the gorge, that it seems absolutely impossible that any animal, and much less a carriage, could descend otherwise than by one terrible plunge into the abyss. It seemed as if a stone, flung from the top, would plunge without touching an obstacle, to the bottom. But those Alpine passes of the Simplon, the Splügen, and the Stelvio, exhibit a power of mind over matter—a triumph of man over nature—an achievement of art over obstacles that seem to bid defiance to anything short of that power which says, “The mountains and the hills shall be made low.” The road, formed by the most consummate engineering, works its way among rocks, winds around projecting shoulders, traverses the face of precipices, looking down into depths that seem unfathomable, turning now in one direction and then in another, and still gradually descending till it traverses the sides of the gorge, and still descending, after some time sweeps on beside a furious torrent, and becomes that very road which had at first appeared from above but a narrow pathway, traceable beside the thin thread of water in the distant recesses of the gorge.

The gorge of Gondo is one of the finest in the Alps. It has no superior, except the Via Mala of the Splügen. It has not the beauty of the Via Mala, nor yet its wonders, which are beyond all powers of description ; but the gorge of Gondo has more of the utter wildness and savage grandeur that oppresses, and yet fascinates. In some places it is gloomy, the sides meeting so close, and at times almost touching above, so as to exclude the light of the sun ; while in other places the gigantic rocks so completely block up the gorge, leaving scarcely space sufficient for the foaming torrent that boils and rages through it, that it has been necessary to cut galleries or tunnels through the solid rock, conducting the road for miles through this singular scene. For the greater portion of the way, all is wild, rocky, sterile. There are no objects but stupendous rocks, yawning chasms, and raging torrents, and these last are sometimes so violent as to sweep all before them. On one occasion, no less than five miles of the road, with all its bridges and embankments, were swept away for ever : so that when we saw it, though sufficiently repaired for travelling, it yet presented an appearance so disastrous, that it was said that the government even contemplated abandoning it ! There is no apology could be deemed sufficient to justify the abandonment of the greatest of the works of Napoleon.

The gorge of Gondo continues for several miles, and is gradually descending the whole way. But when it opens, and the road debouches from the wild, gloomy, rocky ravine, the eye falls upon one of the most charming scenes in the world. It is Italy—sunny and beautiful Italy, presented in one of her brightest, richest, and loveliest valleys. As far as the eye can range within a wide amphitheatre of

mountains and hills, all is one wide scene of verdure ! Every spot was clothed with groves of chesnuts, with oliveyards or vineyards, till the whole valley seemed bathed in the deepest verdure ; while innumerable towers, white as snow, and tall, stately campaniles, lifted their heads above all, and charmingly contrasted with the rich and luxuriant foliage. It was perhaps the season of the year when such a scene is clothed in more than its accustomed ornaments. At all events it presented to the eye, one of the most enchanting scenes ever witnessed, heightened perhaps beyond its natural loveliness, by contrast with the wild and savage character of the gorge, from which we had just emerged. The aspect of the scene was essentially Italian in its loveliest phase, and was on the whole, one of those scenes which, once seen, can never be forgotten.

And now we are in Italy. It occupied at least twelve hours of actual travelling, to accomplish the pass. The distance is so great, and the ascent so steep, and the pace at which the horses, whatever be the number, can move, so slow, that it is impracticable, ordinarily, to effect the passage comfortably in a shorter period. The actual distance from Brieg in Switzerland, to Domo d'Ossola in Italy, is considerable, even apart from the fact that the Alps intervene. And although those who travel with post-horses can accomplish the whole distance in one day, yet those who travel with vetturini-horses are obliged to sleep on the summit of the pass. It is among the *disagremens* of that mode of travelling.

And now all is changed. The scenery, the climate, the foliage, the costume, and the language, are all as different as possible on the north and on the south of the Alps. Grandeur characterizes the scenery of the former, as love-

liness is the characteristic of the latter. And this loveliness seemed doubly heightened by its striking contrast to those wild, rugged scenes, of stupendous mountains and eternal snows, with which our eyes had become familiar, during our two months' wandering in Switzerland. The road lay through the richest valley that can be imagined, passing through Domo d' Ossola, and then descending rapidly to Lago Maggiore. In the morning we were among scenes of eternal snows: In the evening we were in one of the brightest and sunniest of the valleys of Italy.

This was the first of the Italian lakes which I had seen, and it proportionately affected me. Since then, we have traversed the whole Lago de Garda, from Desinzano to Rues, and spent some time exploring all the scenes upon that queen of the lakes—Lago de Como; but still the scenery of the Lago Maggiore comes freshly and sweetly on the memory, and it is remembered as a place of exceeding loveliness. We were pleased, as all must be pleased, with the position of the Inn at Baveno. It is on the verge of the lake, and we arranged to remain there, in order to explore the scenery of its shores.

The next day we were on the waters. The sun was as a furnace above; the waters were as a mirror beneath, and away we went, skimming along the smooth and shining lake. The boatmen chatted and laughed with a vivacity essentially Italian. Our object was not only to enjoy the ride on the water, but also to visit the Isola Madre and the Isola Bella, of which so much has been said and sung, and of which yet more has been dreamed in the fancyings of young days.

Isola Madre is a very sweet and attractive spot, and possesses as much natural and artificial beauty as is possible

to comprehend in so small an island. It is purely Italian. There are terraces with beautiful views : avenues of umbrageous trees : a profusion of orange and citron perfuming the air : long flights of stone steps adorned with little statues, and dropping fountains and fragrant gardens, and much else that might make this little island a little paradise. The views of the lake from the different terraces, and the peeps at the smooth waters and the smiling shores, and the noble mountains, seen through the vistas of rare and fine trees, were really enchanting. I felt that if the life of a Christian might ever be the life of a recluse—if he could be justified in withdrawing from the scenes and the dwellings of his fellow-men—from those busy haunts where he finds objects to awaken his sympathies and to call forth his benevolence—and in giving way to the indulgence of his own love of retirement or indolence, in the calm and pleasant life of a recluse, it would not be easy to select a scene more suited to his purpose than this little island. But the path to heaven has too much self-denial for a recluse, and the life of a practical Christian is immeasurably more befitting us than the life of a solitary.

Isola Bella we also visited. It contains the palace of the Borromeo family, a structure without architectural beauty and without associations of interest, except as having been for a short time occupied by Napoleon. The gardens however have invested this island with interest, not from their own nature, but from the occasion and circumstances of their creation. It is said that they were planted nearly two centuries ago, by one who desired to find a home and a resting-place suited to the tastes of her whose happiness was worth the world to him. The hanging-gardens of Babylon were created in order to find a

home for one whom the imperial monarch delighted to honour. And they were planted with every tree and every flower of her native clime, that, coming from the sunny south, she might, as far as possible, enjoy the shades of the same trees, and the perfume of the same flowers, as in the days of her childhood. The thought was generous, and deserved success. It is said that the same motive originated the planting of the gardens of the Isola Bella. I am sure the object of so sweet an affection must have gratefully accepted the will, whatever she may have thought of the performance. To my poor taste it seemed to be a rock covered with artificial soil, arranged in formal terraces, studded with grotesque statues, and presenting to the eye a structure very much in the style of architecture so common in sugar-candy palaces of our confectioners. It looked for all the world as if the young lovers had often together studied examples of that architectural style, so much a favourite with our juvenile taste.

Having devoted a day to the scenery of the lake at Baveno, we resolved to appropriate another to view the shores and the scenes in the neighbourhood of Arona, which stands on the border of the same lake, about twelve miles further. Having now arrived where post-horses could always be obtained, we were able more completely to command our time. We started for Arona; the drive was very pleasant along the margin of the lake, and the ever-varying view of the waters and the distant shores beyond them, and the trellised vine, and the clustering grapes, and the white campaniles, combined with the balmy air and softened hues of all nature, gave an inexpressible charm to the scenery of this beautiful lake. And then at Arona, as evening stole on, and twilight was falling on

the scene, there was not a breath to rustle the leaves of the trees, there was not a ripple to disturb the smooth waters ; all was as still and tranquil as the grave, except that here and there a little skiff might be seen gliding quietly along the calm surface, and the splashing of the oars might be heard stealing along the waters in the stillness of the evening. And then as night came on, it was sufficiently clear and bright to enable us to discern the opposite shores with their villages, their mountains and their dark foliage, while the skies above were one wide field of stars, intensely brilliant in the clear atmosphere. And the waters below gave back a reflection as brilliant of every star, all presenting a view as enchanting as can be conceived : so that, though our time was precious, we felt that a day spent at Baveno and another at Arona were amply recompensed.

After remaining two days at this charming lake, we proceeded to Milan.

There were several English families at the hotel, who like ourselves were *en route* for Rome or other parts of Italy. And when Sunday arrived, I resolved to continue a custom from which we never swerved on the continent ; I informed the proprietor of the hotel that as a clergyman of the Church of England, I proposed to read the services of that Church in our apartments, and requested him to inform the English families in his hotel that their attendance would be most welcome. At the morning service there was an attendance of thirty-five persons. At the evening service there were twenty-four. In every place where we spent the Sunday, during the year and a half of our sojourn in the land of strangers, this was our invariable habit, provided there was not a regular English chap-

lain and English service in the place. In that case, which I am most happy and thankful to say is very frequent, we gladly attended the regular service, but in many places, as Milan, Venice, Grindelwald, Inspruck, &c., the arrival of an English clergyman, and his offer to conduct the services of our Church, is sure to receive a thankful welcome among the English families. The number of English is so great, passing and repassing in every direction, that it is very seldom that a congregation cannot be found, and we know by experience that the services are eagerly and gladly attended. It should be a fixed principle with every English clergyman, wherever he may be travelling, to retain and exhibit his clerical character; invariably to move among his fellow-countrymen with the stamp and impress of the clerical character, never forgetting his own sacredness as derived from his office, and then that sacredness will never be forgotten by those among whom he moves. Let it be exhibited in the tone of his manner and the holiness of his conversation. It is more necessary that he should be thus careful even beyond ordinary care, as he is thus frequently a check upon many improprieties that would otherwise be committed; and also a great source of encouragement, comfort, and usefulness to some who feel a reverence for God, a love for the gospel, and an attachment to the services of religion, but who in travelling have at times much to interfere with one and to preclude the other. The circumstance of giving notice of the service at Milan led to my being immediately sent for to visit an English lady, who was then believed to be on her bed of death, and who otherwise must have been without ministerial counsel and instruction and comfort in that hour of trial. And she too was the daughter of a clergyman, now

dying far away from the home of her father and the Church of her home. How happy might it be if all under such circumstances, when far from all ministrations, could say as one did say, "Ah! the Great High Priest himself is with me, I shall need no other!" It is not often in this sad world that we meet such instances of the power of faith and the reality of religion, and unhappily there are too many who need the experience and counsel of the messenger of God.

We remained several days at Milan, so as to see, at our leisure, the cathedral, the churches, the galleries, and all the other sights so usually recommended to the attention of strangers. They are all detailed in the guide-books, and there I shall leave them.

The Cathedral, however suggests some remarks. Among the many subjects upon which my knowledge is the purest and simplest ignorance is—Architecture. It is true that I have seen some examples, and these among the best of their kind, of the Gothic and the Moorish—of the Greek and the Italian; and I have learned to distinguish, though with some occasional mistakes, between the different styles: but I have no soul for architectural science. I can enter indeed into the grand idea, the master-effect of the whole, and feel the poetry of architecture—the deep impression created by the great and magnificent, or by the beautiful and simple, conception. I can thus feel its pervading power, its real impressiveness, arising out of the combination of vastness, magnificence, simplicity, proportion: I can feel this, as I should feel the mysteriousness that pervades the shadowy depths of a forest, the dark recesses of some noble valley, or the sublime summit of some Alpine mountain. I can feel this in some noble architectural piles I could name,

without the least knowledge of their scientific details, and without the least envy for those, whose admiration descends from the impressiveness of the magnificent whole, to the mere *minutiæ* of the mechanical details. I do not defend this my ignorance, or my taste, but I give it as my apology for much I may have to say as to the architecture of the churches of Italy.

The Gothic style seems most conducive to devotional feeling. The Greek seems the best adapted for assemblies for religious worship. The Moorish is little calculated for either of these purposes, and the Italian offends the taste in every particular.

Italy may be the cradle of art ; she certainly is not the nurse of taste. And nowhere is her deficiency in this latter particular more apparent than in her attempt to reconcile the different styles of architecture by a species of amalgamation, a dove-tailing of the Gothic on the Greek, and an engrafting of the Moorish on the Italian. She is not without her triumphs, however, even in this ; but in nothing have those triumphs been more complete, than in that exquisite and beautiful pile, the cathedral of Milan, a sort of spurious Gothic, the architecture of which is as difficult to describe as it is easy to admire. It is built of white marble, and is admitted on all hands to be one of the most beautiful structures in the world. It has not the massive tower, or the lofty-steeple, incrusting with its rich fretwork, or the many niches and statues that stand to guard the entrance of our Gothic Cathedrals ; and on which our architects seem to have expended their utmost skill, both in the grand idea, and in the minute detail ; and yet there are statues beyond number, and decorations without end. It has not those exquisite details in the interior, that

by their effects give the impression of richness and finish, and offer so much variety of objects for the eye to rest on; no elaborately-wrought screen, no exquisitely-carved work in the choir, no tall-fluted or niched columns with carved capitals; in short there is nothing of those innumerable details of finished and elegant workmanship in the interior, so usual in our Gothic piles. In the exterior there seems to the eye the most perfect finish of detail. In the interior there is little to attract admiration. But in both there is the absence, at least to my feelings, of all the soul, the mind, the ideal, of the Gothic. There is no impressive grandeur. There is no reverend sacredness stamped upon it. It never suggests the feeling or the idea of devotion. And its very beauty is in one respect its great defect; for being built of white marble—marble so white and pure as to elicit the admiration of all—it retains always the impress of newness. It has nothing, and never can have anything, of the stamp of venerable antiquity, so essentially a compound part of our ideal of the Gothic in its impressiveness. It looks like a cathedral designed and cast at Birmingham, and sent to order for erection at Milan, as an example of skill in manufacture. And a beautiful specimen it undoubtedly is, though divested externally and internally of all that I love most to look on and to feel in the Gothic architecture.

The relics of St. Carlo Boromeo are deposited in this cathedral. And if in his life he loved not “the pomps and vanities” of the world, he has at least in his death as ample a share as the most ambitious could desire. The poor fleshless skeleton, there waiting till the resurrection-morning, will arise clothed in the richest costume of silver and gold, with rings, and chains, and crosier studded with

the most brilliant and precious gems, enshrined in a case of crystal of incalculable costliness. There the eyeless skull—the noseless face—the grinning mouth exhibits a ghastly-sight—a hideous and loathsome and sickening spectacle, mocking the gorgeous and splendid trappings in which the skeleton is arrayed. Multitudes kneel and pray to this ghastly spectacle, which seems to mock the eyeless skull with such pompous pageantry.

The Church of St. Ambrose has as much interest, though less beauty, than the cathedral. *It is said* that the gates of the church are the identical gates or doors so celebrated in ecclesiastical legend, as having been shut by St. Ambrose in the face of the Emperor Theodosius. It is certain, however, that that extraordinary transaction took place at the Cathedral Church, and therefore, *if* these be the very doors, they must have been taken from the cathedral to be placed here—an unlikely proceeding. *It is said*, likewise, that the original serpent of brass which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, is deposited in this church. It is placed on a lofty column in the body of the church, and is regarded with superstitious veneration. It is certain, however, that the Holy Scriptures expressly state, that King Hezekiah had it broken in pieces to prevent such idolatrous tendencies; and therefore it is a perplexing inquiry to ascertain how, unbroken and entire, it was presented to this church, seventeen centuries after it had been broken in pieces! But difficulties and perplexities of this kind are easily resolved under an Italian sky. When the reverend sacristan called our attention to this relic, and would persuade us it was the original serpent, my wife reminded him that it had been broken in pieces by king Hezekiah; when he smartly replied, *Non e certo*.

I went repeatedly to visit this cathedral, with the view to observe the details of the architecture without, and the nature of the service within. As I looked at it, and could not fail to admire the beautiful structure, and to regard it as a noble specimen of art, exhibiting both power of conception and skill of execution, I could not avoid inquiring, when I observed its services—*What is the use of this cathedral ?*

The answer to this inquiry is the same as is received in reply to similar inquiries in most of the cities of Italy. The answer is—*It is the great ornament of the city.*

This seems always the first idea in the mind of an Italian. Every city, and town, and village, must possess some special and peculiar object, for which and by which, it is to be distinguished from all others. One boasts its cathedral, a second its cemetery, a third its picture ; each has something peculiar to itself, and of this the inhabitants are proud, imagining themselves to uphold it above all competitors, and to expend on it all their superfluous riches, as being a public and common possession. It becomes the grand sight, and no expenditure, however extravagant, is spared in order to exhibit it to advantage. It is natural, that in a country like Italy, where ecclesiastics in the various forms of Bishops, Abbots, Priests, Monks, Jesuits, are so numerous as well as influential, these men should adroitly direct attention to some object in which themselves are interested ; and thus by exalting the Cathedral, or Church, or Convent, &c., secure the interest of the public feeling in its maintenance and adornment. It is thus with the cathedral of Milan. It is the pride and boast of the city, and it is regarded among the inhabitants chiefly in the light of the greatest ornament of their city.

But it is seldom viewed by them simply in reference to that God to whom it is dedicated, or to that Church for whose services it is designed. Its chief use seems to be that of Ornament,—its secondary use, that of Religion. And accordingly, it is but poorly attended, and many churches, of not one tenth its magnitude, have a far larger attendance of the inhabitants for worship. I visited it many times both on Sunday and other days, and was surprised at the fewness of the attendants, the more especially as one of their popular preachers was there on Sunday, when the whole of his congregation did not exceed an hundred and twenty persons!

And now for a few thoughts on the Cathedral System.

There is “a great gulf” between the original intention and the modern application of the cathedral system.

The original of the system, was the Bishop or head Missionary planting his church as the central or principal station for missionary labour—a station from which his missionaries might issue in every direction to propagate the gospel of Christ. When any missionary had succeeded in his labour of love, and a number of converts had embraced the faith, then a congregation was formed and a church erected in that locality, and the missionary or some other at the discretion of the Bishop, was there placed, and became the local or parochial clergyman. In this manner he sent his band of missionaries, and planted his churches;—his own church, as the central station, being the church for the converts of that locality, (though afterwards called, the cathedral-church, from being the seat of the Bishop,) was the church of the locality where he resided; so as that originally a cathedral-church differed in no respect whatever from any other parochial church,

being for the same uses, and having the same services, with the alone exception, that it belonged to the station, or district, or parish in which the Bishop resided. And at the same time the clergy who were with him, were his fellow-labourers in the missionary work, and his fellow-councillors and advisers in all circumstances connected with the exercise of his authority in the work of the mission, very much as is the case in the present day, where all give counsel and assistance to the principal mission of the missionary settlement.

In after-times a change passed upon this system ; and necessarily so, when the land was thoroughly evangelized, and the people universally made profession of Christianity ; since, when churches with their own especial ministry were planted in every locality, there was no longer any necessity for a band of missionaries. It was desirable indeed that there should be schools and colleges, where men might be educated for the ministry of the Church, under the eye of the Bishop, and that therefore some clergymen should be retained near the Bishop, as masters and teachers of such. It was also desirable, that in the exercise of the unlimited and irresponsible authority of the Episcopate, the Bishop should be provided by the Church with wise, experienced, and holy clergymen, to assist his counsels, and give him the advantage of their advice. And such was really the case. The Bishop seemed indeed no longer to require a band or corps of missionaries, to send as evangelizers through his district ; but still he seems to have stood in need of some to conduct his schools and colleges, and to assist him as his advisers. These, as residents with the Bishop, and therefore frequenting his church, became

a sort of clerical staff or council, and are the original of those usually styled the Cathedral Clergy.

In times still later, a further change passed, in some countries, over the system. It was now the time when wealth and honours flowed in a broad stream into the church, and made an entrance for the evil spirits of ambition, covetousness, and self-seeking. They came in, wafted upon the surface of the broad current. The interests of the church became identified, in the minds of many, with the interests of the clergy. The laity were ignorant, and the clergy ambitious ; the laity were characterized by a gross and stupid superstition, and the clergy were signalized by an unseemly and knavish avarice. And as the laity were so willing to be deceived, and the clergy so ready to exact, there was " ample space and verge enough," for providing well for the staff or band of clergymen around the Bishop. New offices were created, and canons for the cathedral, and prebendaries for the cathedral, and readers for the cathedral, and choristers for the cathedral, were called into existence, and there were ample endowments for all. The Bishop, appointing those of his own motion, and regarding them as his own creatures, could not look on himself—at least could scarcely look on himself, as called on in any degree to regard them as his fellow-councillors or advisers. And thus, as they had already ceased to be regarded as Missionaries in the natural course of things, so these cathedral clergy soon ceased to be treated as fellow-councillors, and thus sunk into the unenviable and unchristian state, of mere creatures of the Bishop, and drones of the church.

But again, the system underwent in some places a further change. The schools or colleges became monasteries.

When the monastic system wielded the mighty powers, which at one period came into its possession, it laid its grasping hand upon the cathedral itself. Steadily pursuing its career of aggression and ambition, it soon secured possession of the schools and colleges, and then of the canonries and prebends and readerships, and even claimed and exercised the claim through them, of the election of the Bishops ; while they seized the cathedral, plundered the people of their church, compelled the people to erect another church for parochial uses and parochial accommodation, and held the cathedral to be the church, not of the people, but of the clergy. They thus perverted the cathedral wholly from its original purpose, as the chief church, and made it a mere supernumerary establishment, distinct from parish purposes : and then in the natural course of usurpation, they wrested it afterwards from the Bishop, so as to make it independent both of the Bishop and of the People,—a church for the cathedral clergy, who having no parochial duties, and no cure of souls, added hypocrisy to usurpation, and professed to employ their time and their church in saying masses, to relieve the souls of all their benefactors—of those at least who were disposed to pay for them,—from the sufferings of purgatory.

It was thus that the cathedral church, from having been the first or principal missionary station and church of the converted inhabitants of its district, has been perverted into a mere chapel for the cathedral clergy. And at the same time, the body of cathedral clergy have deteriorated from the rank of christian missionaries, into that of advisers of the Bishop ; then into that of mere drones of the church, and lastly, into the position of idle monks, pretending to relieve souls from purgatory.

Truly there is "a great gulf fixed" between the original institution and the later uses of cathedrals and cathedral clergy. And this latter state was very much the state of the system in England for some centuries immediately preceding the Reformation, as it is very much the state of the cathedrals and cathedral clergy in Italy at the present day.

The phase of the Cathedral system in England is peculiar.

At the time of the Reformation, a considerable difficulty arose. The maintenance of the Cathedral system, at least in the state to which it had fallen, was inconsistent with the practical principles of the Reformation. It was in its then state useless—emphatically a useless system for the purposes of a pure and reformed religion: and in order to be useful, it required a total remodelling.

The splendid fabrics being already in existence, and large and ample endowments being already provided, the great question was how they ought to have been disposed of. To destroy those magnificent structures would have been an act of Vandalism almost without parallel in the history of the world; and to suffer them to fall to decay and ruin would have been as terrible a barbarism, deserving the worst execration of posterity. And yet their continuance in this their then state and for their then uses, was utterly inconsistent with the religious spirit of the Reformation.

It can never be too much lamented that there was no adequate reformation of the Cathedral system, and that through the lapse of three hundred years, the Bishops of the Church of England had never proposed either to Convocation in the age of Convocations, or to Parliament in this age of Parliaments, to make the Cathedral system useful to the Church and subsidiary to the advancement of "the true religion established among us." But that on

the other hand they have continued and perpetuated the former state of things only in a more effete and useless state, eagerly exercising their right of patronage in the appointment of the Cathedral clergy and appropriation of the Cathedral endowments, but making no efforts to render them subsidiary to the real wants of the Church, or to the true interests of religion.

There were three courses, any one of which might have been pursued with real profit to the Church of England, and the advancement of true religion.

1. They might have adopted the collegiate system, appointing Professors instead of Canons, and Lecturers instead of Prebendaries, and Tutors instead of Readers, and Schoolmasters instead of Choristers. If the Bishops, acting on their own authority, or applying to parliament for the requisite power, had converted the residences of the Cathedral clergy into Cathedral Colleges, so as to secure a sound theological education for those who were to be prepared for the ministry of the church—if they had appropriated the endowments, now wasted upon the Cathedral clergy, to the maintenance of such colleges and schools, such professors and teachers, as would effectuate all this, then indeed they would have accomplished much for the best interests of the Church of England.

2. Or they might have made another arrangement, which was always and still is in their power, and might at any moment be carried into effect. They might confer these Cathedral appointments solely upon learned men—upon studious men, who desired to be separated from all parochial occupations, so as to devote themselves uninterruptedly to study. They might thus provide for men who were desirous of the time and opportunity for study, and

who should be precluded from holding any other species of preferment, as that would defeat the very object in view. If the Bishops had done this or even attempted to do this, or would even now at this the eleventh hour of the Church, begin to do this, the Church of England would reap a noble harvest from such encouragement to learning.

3. Or yet again they might have pursued a third course. If they had devised some arrangement by which, always retaining the Cathedral Clergy as a sort of clerical staff around them, who, like the staff-officers of the Army, or the assistant missionaries of a missionary station, might be sent to any direction or to any work that might be required in the exigencies of the times—if new churches were built in poor districts, where there was no maintenance or endowments—if any parochial clergyman from ill health or other causes were compelled to be absent one or more weeks from his charge, then the members of this clerical staff—these Cathedral clergy—could be sent to supply his place—if the Bishops of the Church of England had done this, then they had done that which would have been found an incalculable convenience and assistance to the clergy, and a great advantage to the Church.

The bishops have not adopted any of these courses ; they have continued the mediæval system without mitigation. They have indeed, as the articles of the church required, torn in pieces the veil of hypocrisy under which it was pretended that the Cathedral clergy were occupied in saying masses for the relief of the souls in purgatory : but, while they have done this they have not required that the Cathedral clergy and the Cathedral endowments should be usefully employed for the cause of religion, or for the interests of the church.

It is often stated in apology for the bishops, that however desirable such a measure might be, and however desirable they might be to accomplish it, they have not the requisite authority—they have not the power.

Have the bishops exhibited any such desire, by applying to the legislature for such powers ?

I answer—No.

The bishops have not exercised the inherent powers which they possess for making the system useful: they could have carried out at any time the second of the three courses, to which I have referred. They required no new or additional powers for this, and if they required new or additional powers for enforcing any other salutary reform, they ought to have applied to the legislature. But instead of this, they have left themselves open to the charge of acquiescing in a system, which, without promoting education, without encouraging learning, and without assisting the over-wrought clergy, has enabled themselves to heap sinecures—lucrative sinecures, on those who were already sufficiently provided for by benefices. If indeed they had conferred these sinecures upon the poor working curates, to assist them in their deep poverty—if they had conferred them upon those laborious men who had expended their health and strength and been broken down in their labours for the gospel—if they had done this, not a murmur would ever have been heard against the system. But when these sinecures, with scarcely a single exception, were conferred upon those who already had benefices elsewhere, and were already amply paid for the duties they performed, it must cease to be a matter for wonder that the wise and good in the land should have reclaimed against the system.

The result has been that as a Reform did not come from within, it has come with a vengeance from without. The system has been placed under a process by which the incomes of the Cathedrals have been sequestrated—alienated from the Cathedrals for ever; and reserving enough to maintain the services of the Cathedrals as of other churches, they have been appropriated to endow curacies and supply clergy for the populous districts. This was well and wisely done. Much wealth is thus wrenched from the grasp of the worthless drones, and appropriated to the support of the working bees of the Church.

But let us return to Italy. The number of Cathedrals or Duomos is endless, and it may be remarked of one and of all alike, that they are regarded by the people as much in a civil as in a religious light. For all the purposes of personal religion, public worship or private devotion, they have recourse to their favorite churches or chapels, whether belonging to the parish or attached to some Convent. And the Cathedral or Duomo is looked on in an Italian town very much as a Guildhall or Town-hall would be regarded in an English town. It seems regarded as a public or common property; being generally an ornament to the town, and maintained and decorated accordingly, appropriated for the greater religious fêtes, and thus used upon all public occasions, of more than usual importance. Those of Milan, Venice, Pisa, Florence, Orvietto, and Rome are the most remarkable among them, at least the most remarkable we have seen.

CHAPTER II.

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE TOMB OF ST. AUGUSTINE—VISIT TO THE CERTOSA OF PAVIA—DESCRIPTION OF THE CONVENT—CONFISCATION OF ITS PROPERTY—SUPPRESSION OF CONVENTS BY ROMAN CATHOLIC GOVERNMENTS IN ITALY AND SPAIN—THE CATHEDRAL OF PAVIA—THE SHRINE OF AUGUSTINE—HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS—DEPARTURE FROM PAVIA—THE DOGANO—FORFEITURE OF BIBLES—THE CHARACTER OF THE SCENERY—THE PRESSING OF GRAPES FOR WINE—APPROACH TO GENOA—THE VILLAS—THE GATE—THE CITY—THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNZIATA—INVITO SACRO—THE STATE OF THE ITALIAN CHURCHES—THEIR MAGNIFICENCE AND THEIR POVERTY—"VESPER, WITH A PROCESSION."

CHAPTER II.

PAVIA—GENOA—THE ITALIAN CHURCHES.

WE remained some days at Milan. We visited the churches, galleries, library, and all the objects of interest usually recommended as deserving a visit. It was impossible not to look with delight upon the Marriage, or Spozalizio, by Raphael—a Forest Scene, by Salvator—The Last Supper, by Da Vinci—and several other exquisite triumphs of the pencil; but the study of these was not the special object, though giving an unwearying charm to it, of our pilgrimage to Rome. I therefore must not dwell on such subjects.

It was during our sojourn at Milan, that we resolved on a pilgrimage to the Shrine or tomb of St. Augustine.

It is in Pavia. In that city,—once so distinguished among the cities of Italy, and still so famed in all the records of history; but now impoverished and decaying away, with scarcely enough to bear witness to its former greatness—stands the tomb or shrine of Augustine. In my student-days, and in the recesses of our collegiate library, I had read a large portion of his voluminous writ-

ings. I had originally applied myself to the task, with a view to ascertaining the true character of the religious principles that pervaded the primitive churches: and so far as his age and church were concerned, his testimony is invaluable. I longed, with an intensity of feeling, to learn for myself the justice or injustice of those claims, which the Church of Rome on one hand, and the Church of England on the other, have respectively advanced, to be regarded as most conformable to the principles and practices of the primitive churches. Twenty years have gone by since then, and the impressions I then received have never been effaced. I poured my whole soul into the reading of Augustine, and I still retain the convictions with which I closed his writings, and the satisfaction which I derived from them. I was a Christian more decidedly *protesting* than ever.

And now that we were so near Pavia, I could not restrain the desire to undertake a pilgrimage to his shrine. The country through which we passed, is uninteresting in its natural scenery. Its historic interest, however, is very great. We made a short detour from the direct road, in order to visit the celebrated Convent, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and usually known as THE CERTOSA OF PAVIA.

It is impossible to look on some of the ecclesiastical edifices of Italy, without being deeply impressed with their grandeur, or magnificence, or singularity. It is scarcely possible to look on St. Peter's at Rome, St. Mark's at Venice, or the Cathedral at Milan, without emotion. It is not indeed the deep, solemn impressiveness that characterizes some of the gothic piles on the north of the Alps. It is not the deep religious feeling, the reverential solemn-

nity and awe, that seems stamped on the finer and grander specimens of gothic architecture ; but still it is a powerful impression in its way—an impression that nothing else can create, and an impression too which—though not religious or devotional—will never be obliterated, but remains inefaceable for ever. It was something of this kind that affected us, as we wandered through the Certosa of Pavia. The entrance is through a noble archway into a court, where the eye at once is fixed on the *facade* of the church. It is like a vast screen, carved throughout, and studded with medallions, images and figures, that defy all attempts at description, while whole stories and legends are represented in basso-relievo in white marble, set off by innumerable specimens of various other marbles on the face of the church. The interior is a noble church in the gothic style, most richly and gorgeously decorated, with its roof colored with *lapis lazuli*, studded with stars of gold, to represent the midnight heavens. The Altar, together with an interior chapel and altar, are among the most richly-adorned and most beautifully carved, even of the churches of Italy. It is impossible to surpass the beauty, the richness, and the elaborate nature of the details. The eye never wearies in examining them ; the spectator is charmed with the details, while deeply impressed with the effect of the whole. And this effect was heightened, by the air of desertion and desolation that seemed to pervade every thing. In moving from chapel to chapel—from gallery to gallery—there was an air of solitude, a sense of loneliness, that weighed heavily on the spirits. Here and there was a monk, fixedly watching every movement through the various parts of the church and the convent—sometimes peeping in through a stealthily-opened door—sometimes.

looking askance from an unexpected window,—creating the consciousness of being closely and most inquisitively watched. But on a nearer approach, they proved but an illusion, being no more than admirably-painted figures, designed to remind the monks, as they moved through these long passages and galleries, that they were not unobserved, and therefore that it behoved them to be circumspect even in such scenes of loneliness. But notwithstanding all this, there was the stamp of solitude and desertion upon all; even the cloisters seemed lonely. With the exception of the Custode who conducted me through the whole establishment,—I did not see a living thing till I entered the gardens, where two monks in their white dress of the order, and a gentleman in black, were walking; and yet it is a vast range of building; but as the great endowments of the establishment have been confiscated—seized by the government, and the number of monks reduced to very few, there is neither the money nor the desire to keep it in repair. The impress of neglect pervades the whole. There are the signs and tokens of decay, that ere long must end in total ruin. And these magnificent buildings will become the type of the monastic system of the middle ages. Once wealthy, powerful, glorious; now poor, weak, despised. Their day has passed away, and can return no more.

But the interest excited in our minds by these scenes of solitude amidst splendour, and of desertion amidst magnificence, must not be supposed to be allied to any feeling of interest for the monastic inmates, that in past or present times have occupied this noble Certosa. I owe a debt of gratitude to this establishment, which I cannot easily repay, for having dissipated a vision—awakened me from a

dream that had long haunted me, before I had undertaken this my pilgrimage to Rome. I had imagined, in the simplicity of my English credulity, derived from believing all I had read and heard of the monastic life, its solitude, its austerities, its penances, its learning and its holiness—I had imagined that the inmates of a convent like this, one of the very best in Europe, would have been characterized by learning and by mortification. And here I beheld the system for the first time, as it existed in its most genuine form, and under the most advantageous circumstances. The extent of learned lore that characterized the monks of this celebrated establishment, may be inferred from the display of learning exhibited upon the facade of their church, where they have pourtrayed all the great ones of the earth in medallions, with their names and titles most formally and elaborately inscribed. Among these, Alexander the Great is enrolled, as one of the Emperors of Rome, and Pompey is inscribed as one of the Kings of Thessaly! As for the life of mortification and solitude, supposed to be characteristic of these convents, it is necessary only to say, that around the cloisters are the cells—those little cells with a hard bed and wooden stool, so usually associated with our English idea of a monk:—and I longed to see them, to look on a *real* hermit's cell—to see the narrow home, the lonely chamber, the dreary cell of the poor, mortified recluse; and all my youthful dreams of lonely vigils, and narrow cells, and banished comforts came crowding on my mind, till in a moment, as by the stroke of some wizard's wand, the visions of romance were dispelled before the realities of a monkish home. The *cell* of each monk was distinct and separate from all others. There was no communication except directly from the cloisters, and this

little *cell*—this creation of my fancy—proved to be a *suite of apartments, consisting of four rooms with a small garden attached!* This is literally the fact. The establishment was arranged for twenty-eight monks, each monk having a separate building to himself, consisting of four apartments, and a garden. Nor is this a peculiar arrangement, as I afterwards found. I have seen the same arrangement in a convent near Florence, where each monk has his suite of four apartments and a little garden! But the Certosa of Pavia was the first convent I had the opportunity of examining, and it certainly dissipated in the most effectual way all my English notions of the dreariness, the wretchedness, the mortification of the life of a recluse. There is not a professor or fellow at Oxford or Cambridge, more comfortably lodged than some of the monks of Italy, where one of them once shewed me his sitting-room, his bed-chamber, his library, fitted also with an altar as his private chapel, and a fourth room, which remained unoccupied,—in all four apartments, with a garden of orange-trees—a very fair proportion for an unmarried recluse. Such things went far towards destroying all my former notions as to the self-denial and austerities of the convent-life.

This Certosa, that is, this convent of Chartreuse Monks, was founded in the fourteenth century. A large and uncultivated district was conferred upon it for its support. In the lapse of three centuries the whole property of the surrounding country improved in the natural course of things, and this district grew to prodigious value; infinitely beyond anything requisite for the right and proper support of the convent. The government sequestrated the superfluous revenues, and appropriated them to national purposes.

The country was Roman Catholic, the government was Roman Catholic. And they applied these confiscated revenues to the purposes of a Roman Catholic people. This was done during the last century ; since then the French, while in possession of Italy, following the example of the former governments, have reduced the wealth of the convent still more ; and there is now scarcely sufficient for its adequate maintenance. It is a striking illustration that the suppression of monasteries, and confiscation of their endowments, is as congenial to the spirit of Romanism in Italy, as to the spirit of Protestantism in England ; at least the governments in both countries seem to have felt no religious scruples, sufficiently urgent to restrain them ; and surely if it be a sin in one, it is no less a sin in the other. The convent is now maintained with fewer monks and diminished revenues.

The Certosa of Pavia was the first of these great monastic institutions which I had an opportunity of examining ; and I was unwilling for that reason to form any decided judgment as to the real value or usefulness or otherwise, of such establishments. I was resolved to form no final opinion, till after visiting others in a more flourishing and well-ordered state ; and especially till I had the advantage of inspecting those that exist in the city of Rome. Nothing therefore shall here be said, as to the usefulness of monastic institutions for the promotion of private devotion or general religion ; it shall be deferred till the conventual system of Rome comes before us, and I shall here only touch on the distinct question of the confiscation of monastic property. It took place in England in the sixteenth century ; it has taken place and is still taking place in Spain and Italy in this nineteenth century.

It is often urged with much real energy and strong religious feeling, that when property of any kind has once been appropriated to the Church, it ought never to be appropriated to any other purpose. It is held to be consecrated thereby, and ought never to be desecrated. It has become the property of God, appertaining to his worship, his house, or his ministers, and a despoiling of it is thought to be like that implied in the question in the Prophet; "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me."

But here a distinction must be made between *the Church of God*, and *the Convent of Monks*—between *the service and worship of God* on one hand, and *the supports of Monkish establishments* on the other. In one case the property is consecrated to God, in the other it is appropriated to the monks. In the former case it may well be questioned, whether it be right to alienate any part or portion of it. In the latter, there can be little doubt as to the powers of the civil rulers in reference to it.

The possessions of *the Convents* are quite distinct from the possessions of *the Church*. They are, in the overwhelming majority of instances, the endowments granted in order to have masses said for the soul of the benefactor. When a man or woman possessed of disposable property, is lying on the bed of sickness and death—when the conscience is burdened under a deep sense of sin—when the memory is oppressed and the heart harrowed with the thought of some action of the past—when the whole mind is weakened and the whole soul crushed under the weight, which like a night-mare presses on it so as that by no effort can it be shaken off—when the unhappy individual is in this state, and then thinks of Purgatory, its flames, its torments, its wailing spirits and tormenting

fiends, believing that the moment the spirit leaves the body, it will plunge in something worse than cauldrons of boiling oil and molten lead, there to burn for weeks, and months, and years, and centuries, till all its sin is purged away by suffering—when, believing this, the unhappy individual lies pale and trembling, and is told at this moment, and verily believes, that the saying a proportionate number of masses can lessen the amount or intensity of his sufferings, or cut them short so as to lessen the time of their endurance—that the intensity of his sufferings, and the time of their endurance, are dependent on the adequacy of the number of masses offered for the repose of the soul in the torments of Purgatory: then it is only natural, it is no more than may be expected from human nature, that the dying, trembling being, should willingly, gladly bequeath his property to be thus appropriated for the peace of his endangered soul. That they do so in every part of Europe, is a matter of fact of which there is evidence every day, even if there were not so many convents and monasteries, as standing memorials of the truth. Some indeed have been endowed under the impression that the act was meritorious—some with a view to atone for some special sin, that haunted the memory—some in order to secure masses and prayers for others. Many such endowments have been made while the benefactor was in health; but the greater number were made on the bed of death, in the fear of purgatory, and in the belief of the efficacy of masses to relieve or release the suffering soul.

On all this system, my opinion is decided. It is propagating superstition for pecuniary ends. It is trafficking in the weakness and credulity of sinners. In the emphatic language of Scripture, it is “through wantonness making

merchandise of men's souls." It is a system of raising money under the false pretence of relieving or releasing the soul from punishment. And, as by the laws of England, as well as by the judgment of honest men, the raising of money under false pretences, is the very essence of the crime of swindling; so I cannot but regard the system of securing endowments for convents and monasteries by these means, as a system of gross and palpable fraud. All bequests, deeds, instruments of any kind, to that effect, are null and void in the eye of natural justice. In England, as is well known, the practice was restrained by the statute of Mortmain;—a statute passed by a Popish parliament, in self-defence.

The endowments or possessions, then, of which we are speaking, had never been given to *the Church*, or consecrated to *God*. They had been given to certain monks and nuns, to found convents and monasteries for their endowment and support. They were an alienation of property from the natural heirs, to strangers, who practised upon the weakness of human nature, in the moments of its greatest depression. They had never been given to the Church, or consecrated to God; and therefore, no sacrilege was committed, and there was no robbing of God, in restoring them to the laity, from whom they were fraudulently obtained.

But, although it is quite natural for a Protestant Christian—especially in England, where the monasteries were so ruthlessly confiscated—to defend the procedure, on the principle that these endowments were fraudulently obtained—on the principle that that which had been taken from the laity, ought to revert to the laity; it is by no means so easy to understand on what principle confiscations to the full extent as ruthless can be defended or sanctioned among

Romanists,—especially the Romanists of Italy and of Spain. The strongest language has been applied to such spoliations, taking place three centuries ago in England. And yet these were not one tithe so bold and daring as the measures of the same character, among the Romanists of Italy and of Spain, during the present century. Nay more! the worst that was then done in England was less harsh and cruel than some analogous suppressions of convents that have taken place in the papal states, by the authority of the late Pope. His partizans have argued, that the necessities of the state demanded it—that, as the large possessions of certain convents were bequeathed to them, in order to the promotion of the religion of the church of Rome; so the supreme head of the church may take those possessions when the necessities of the church of Rome may seem to him to demand it. On this ground of state-necessity—the paramount necessity of supplying the public treasury, the confiscations in the Papal states have been defended.

But this defence will not hold good in Piedmont, in Lombardy, in Tuscany, in Naples. And yet in all these states, the greater part of the monasteries and convents have been suppressed, and their estates seized, during the present century. And though, after a time, many of these convents and monasteries were re-established, yet it was altogether under new circumstances, and the estates were mostly withheld. The convents and monasteries were restored, but the endowments were not restored with them.

It is very true, that the most ruthless confiscations were chiefly perpetrated in the time of the French intrusion; but it is no less true, that several were also perpetrated, as in the case of the Certosa of Padua, before the French

inroads ; and the practice was continued after the dominion of the French had passed away. Never did Henry of England hold the forfeited property in his iron grasp more firmly, than do the Italian governments of the present day, the confiscated property of the convents and monasteries. And yet are they devoted Romanists—among the veriest votaries at the shrine of St. Peter, and at the foot of the Pontiff.

This raises an interesting inquiry.

There are two important considerations operating on the Italian mind. In the first place, the present number of monasteries and convents, though not one third of their number before the suppression, far exceeds anything that the expectations of a traveller could anticipate. The whole land is studded with them ; in the cities, the towns, the villages, the vallies, by the sea-shore, on the mountain-side, by the placid lake, in the forest, everywhere these establishments present themselves to the eye. And the endowments connected with these, embraced, before the suppression, an immense mass—an undue and preponderating proportion of the landed-property of the country. It was also an increasing property—increasing by new bequests from the dying, and by new donations from the inmates ; so that everything seemed to betoken the final accumulation of the great mass of the landed-property in the hands of the monastic establishments. There was a growing appearance of a landed aristocracy of monks, or rather of convents and monasteries ; to the utter exclusion of a lay-propriety or lay-aristocracy. This danger had been obviated in England, by the statutes of Mortmain, so early as the time of Henry II ; but it was imminent in Italy at the beginning of the present century ; while there

seemed no principle in the Italian government, by which such an evil might be prevented. The suppression of the convents and monasteries, together with the confiscation of all their *superfluous* possessions, was precisely the remedy for which the Italian governments sighed, but which they had not the courage or the power to attempt; when, happily, it was accomplished for them. They have not had to bear the odium of the suppression, but they enjoy all the advantages of the confiscation.

In the next place, the real danger in a political light, as connected with these vast and numerous endowments, arose from the privileges connected with the church in Italy. There the ecclesiastics claimed exclusive privileges—exemption from nearly all kinds of taxation—exemption from military service—exemption from civil law. They claimed the power or privilege of giving to the government such pecuniary supplies as they pleased; and in all cases of accusations, of being tried only by their own laws. They thus became a privileged class—a class privileged too in the very points on which governments feel most tenderly. Now, when these establishments were so numerous, as literally to overrun the whole land—when their possessions became so extensive, as to give an overwhelming proportion of the landed property to them—when, by these means, the number of monks and nuns became so vast, as to promise that ere long, the privileged classes would vie in actual numbers with those that were not privileged—when matters were in this state, so inconsistent with political well-being, the governments felt that they were a government only over half the people, and that the other half—the privileged class of ecclesiastical persons, had all the influence of religion and of property in their hands.

They felt it most desirable to restrain this evil ; and therefore, when the monastic establishments were suppressed, and their properties confiscated, they rejoiced to find themselves possessed of all the advantages which they sighed for, without much of the odium attendant on the proceeding.

These are the considerations, almost purely political ones, that influence the Roman Catholic governments and politicians of Italy. And they will take care to prevent the growth of the same evils again. They keenly feel the political danger of the system ; while from their religious or ecclesiastical system, they cannot consistently prevent the growth of such establishments. A more sensible course is accordingly adopted. As soon as any convent has grown more rich than seems necessary for its proper support, the government finds some excuse for taking possession of its superfluous wealth, and thus prevents the extension of the political danger, while it reaps the advantage in the replenishment of its own treasury.

In England, there are few subjects upon which more crude declamation has been expended of late years, than the suppression of the monasteries at the time of the Reformation. It is argued by some romantic youths, that these monasteries should have been retained. And those who so think, naturally lament over the ruins created by the Reformation, and denounce the spirit of Protestantism, as destructive of literature, and ruthless to religion ! It is no more than fair, to remember the inexperience of these dreamers, who are not aware, that the suppression of monasteries, and the confiscation of their endowments, is not at all peculiar to the times of the Reformation, or to the genius of Protestantism. It is as characteristic of the nineteenth century, as of the sixteenth ; and as identical

with the spirit of Political Reform as with the spirit of Protestantism. It certainly was an act committed by Protestants in England in the sixteenth, as it has been an act committed by Roman Catholics in Spain in the nineteenth, century; if it was an unpardonable crime in England, can be no less unpardonable in Italy? If it proved a king to be rapacious, it has also proved a pope to be avaricious.

Leaving the Certosa, we proceeded to Pavia. It is a poor and miserable place, with scarcely a memorial to tell of its former greatness.

The cathedral church contains the shrine and monument of St. Augustine. The veneration which I feel for his memory, would always make the place "where they have laid him," an object of regard.

The cathedral, which is invested with this peculiar interest, has little else to attract or please. It is an unfinished pile, bearing in every part the appearance, not only of being unfinished, but of being destined to remain unfinished, for ever. It is a shapeless and unsightly mass of brick and stone. It contains, suspended to the roof, the lance of the celebrated Orlando. It is hard to say, why such a relic should be deposited amidst the sacredness of a cathedral. But it is not improbable that its wondrous achievements against giants, magicians, and all the evil spirits that fought in the ranks of the infidels, and had spell-bound so many faithful Catholics, had been regarded as proofs, "strong as Holy Writ," of the miraculous character of this lance. And it is not to be wondered at, that in the darkness and superstition of the middle ages, it should have been regarded as a sacred relic, deserving the veneration of the faithful. As we looked at this relic of romance, it seemed to us to be deposited there to fling an air of ridicule

upon all the other relics—religious relics of the place, for it was so large, massive and ponderous, that the spear of Goliath of Gath, “the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam,” was no more than the plaything of a child, in comparison with this lance of Orlando. It would form the mast of a ship. And yet, great as it was, it was kept in countenance by the size of the pulpit, which was sufficiently capacious to contain the whole dean and chapter of the cathedral, if disposed to occupy it together, and to preach “with one voice” to the people. Unusual as this was, and cumbrous as it appeared, it yet struck me as somewhat better than the little unsightly erection in which the preacher is usually confined in our English churches. He always seems to me like a puppet in a box; like those toys of our children, in which, on removing the lid, a figure springs to view. I have seen a pulpit in Ireland, that was more like a little gallery or balcony, some ten or twelve feet in length; so that the preacher neither looked nor felt as if in the pillory. I was much struck with the advantage of its appearance, and the preacher seemed more at his ease. And as I once preached in it, I can testify to its convenience; I wish such were universal.

It is in a side-chapel of this miserable cathedral, that the shrine and monument of St. Augustine may be seen. This recess or chapel seems to have been specially built for its reception, for it has a totally different character, and is lighted in a far superior manner, to any other portion of the fabric. The lower part of this interesting monument is like an altar, being a tomb or shrine with glass in the front. Within this glass may be seen a bundle or parcel of silk; and in this it is said there are deposited the bones of St. Augustine. The legend or tradition is,

that this celebrated man, who died at Hippo in Africa, was buried there where he died. Hippo was then besieged by the Vandals, and as Augustine, its bishop, died in the city during the siege, so he was buried there. It is said that in after-times, when heresy prevailed in the African churches, it was deemed too great a desecration of his bones, to permit them to slumber amidst the bones of heretics,—hence they were transported to Sardinia, where many and devout were the pilgrims that resorted to such sacred relics. But as even Sardinia was at times invaded by the wandering adventurers of the Saracens, the pious pilgrims were occasionally exposed to the utmost dangers in the prosecution of their pilgrimage. The Sardinian monks of the shrine where the relics were deposited, were therefore easily induced to permit the sacred relics to be removed beyond the reach of danger; and they exhibited this marvellous display of piety and devotion and disinterestedness, *on condition of being paid a suitable sum of money in silver and gold pieces*,—of course wholly incommensurate with the value of the silk handkerchief containing certain bones which they asserted were those of St. Augustine. This money was gladly paid by Luitprand, who deposited the relics at Pavia, not only from motives of piety, as consecrating the spot where they were laid, but also from the conviction that he would be amply recommenced even in this life, by the countless pilgrims who would thenceforth be induced to resort to that city, to worship at his shrine.

I looked with deep and natural interest upon this spot—the tomb and monument of one of the greatest fathers of the primitive church. The figure of Augustine lay in marble on it. He was surrounded, on the canopy, with a multitude of little images of saints and angels, and alle-

gorical personages. It was said that there were 290 figures of this kind on one part or other of the monument, which yet is far from large, in comparison with others, but is very beautiful as a whole, while it is exquisite in all its details. It looks like a gigantic mass of exquisitely-carved ivory ; while its gothic forms—its pointed arches—its fine pinnacles—its chiselled niches—its minute images, present a group that attracts the eye, challenges the closest examination, and pleases the taste by its general effect. Its fault, however, is a great one ; it looks, except for its size, like a bijou in the boudoir of a lady, or a curiosity in the museum of an antiquary, rather than the tomb that contains the ashes, and the monument that speaks of the virtues and learning, of one of the greatest ornaments of the human family.

Augustine was born at Tagasta in Numidia, in the year 354. His father desired only his advancement in the world. His mother Monica was a truly pious and devoted woman ; and she had so carefully watched over him and endeavoured to instil Christianity into his young mind, that though he remained unbaptized to maturity—though he fell into all the errors of the Manichees—though scepticism and infidelity had done their work in him—though he had degraded himself in the indulgence of the most vicious passions—though he was the prey of various errors and sins till past thirty years of age, yet such was the effect of the early power of a mother's words and a mother's love, that, as he states in his confessions, through all the errors, sins, and distractions of which he was the victim through those long years of fleshly indulgence and mental conflict, the name of Jesus Christ remained graven upon his heart. It was with him as with many others ;—

a seed, as it were, had been implanted in the soul ; and as in the natural world the seeds lie unseen and unnoticed, and the rains and the snows and the storms of winter gather over them and pass away ; and then when the genial breath of spring breathes upon them, they live and put forth their foliage and their blossoms and their fruit ; so the seeds of life, and light, and glory, when planted in the soul, seem often to lie there dormant through all the days of youth ; till after many days, sickness or affliction, or the Word, press on the heart or the conscience, the breath of the Spirit moves over it, and then the long-hidden seed springs upward, and developes itself into the vigor of the Christian man. Augustine was the child of many tears and many prayers, his mother's eyes grew dim with weeping, and her heart grew old in praying for him ; and she was blessed in her deed, for among all the fathers and saints of the primitive churches, there was not one greater than Augustine.

He was a man of extraordinary genius—a deep thinker and an able divine. However painful and dangerous to the individual, a practical and experimental acquaintance with sin and scepticism will always be ; yet there can be no doubt that those are the most practical divines, and the most useful theologians, who have themselves been subjected to the ordeal, and have lived to review the evils from which they have been rescued. Holiness becomes more vividly identified with happiness, when contrasted with the past experience of the misery of sin ; and truth appears all the more lovely, after a long acquaintance with the deformity of error. It was thus with Augustine ; his knowledge of the adversary with which he had to contend, gave power to his reasonings and fervor to his zeal.

He was the ornament of the western Churches, and the extent—the learning—the talent—the truthfulness of his writings have been so universally acknowledged, that they became for many ages a sort of standard of Theology. His works against the Pelagians—against the Donatists—against the Manicheans, and in short against almost all the great evils of the Church in his days, were invaluable at the time, and by their extraordinary success in breaking down the strongholds of error, secured a permanent place among the treasures of the Church. His Epistles are of great interest ; his “ City of God ” is an incomparable work ; and his Confessions are among the most interesting works among the records of the Christian Church. We must not wonder at the prodigious influence his writings afterwards exercised in the world ; but rather at the present departure of the western Churches from that which seems to be the grand essence of his theological system. His controversies with Pelagius forced him to examine all the points connected with the doctrines of divine grace ; and he appears to have felt himself forced by degrees, from the necessity of the case, to take his stand on very high views of those doctrines,—so high indeed, that the strongest and boldest expressions in the writings of Calvin, have their parallel in the writings of Augustine. Previous to the Reformation of the sixteenth century, his works were studied by the few men who loved the study of theology, and Luther and the Reformers seem to have been deeply read in them, and thoroughly imbued with their spirit ; and it seems to be the use, the powerful use that the Reformers made of the writings of Augustine, and then the use which the Jansenists afterwards made of them against the Jesuits, that has led to the very general

neglect of the works of Augustine, so palpable in the Church of Rome at the present day.

Augustine was baptized in advanced life, and was elevated as Co-Bishop with Valerius in the city of Hippo ; thus realising in his own person that anomaly in ecclesiastical order—the existence of two Bishops in the same See. During his episcopate, Genseric and his Vandals invaded Africa, wasted the Christian Churches, and besieged the city of Hippo. It was gallantly defended for fourteen months. During this protracted siege, Augustine sickened and died, in the year 430, at the age of 76, leaving his library to his Church, and bequeathing to the Christian world the legacy of one of the brightest names in the annals of Christianity.

His monumental tomb and his mortal remains are now at Pavia. But the truest relics of St. Augustine are his writings, and not his bones. And in the same way the most precious relics of the apostles, are their gospels and epistles,—their inspired writings, and not their mouldering remains. There are some, however, in Italy, who never look upon their inspired writings, but who devoutly worship their mouldering bones. In the cathedral at Milan, they showed us several phials full of *the teeth, bits of skin, scraps of hair, pieces of the nails, &c. of the twelve apostles*, but they had not a single copy of THE SCRIPTURES ! It is much to be suspected that these mouldy relics are cherished, because they tend to generate superstition, and that the Holy Scriptures are excluded, because they tend to its expulsion !

We left Pavia with all its past glories and present miseries behind us, and took the road to Genoa. The

posting is satisfactorily arranged by the government, the officers giving the traveller, on first passing the frontier, a list of all the posts, expences, time, &c. along the whole route to be travelled, so that no imposition can be practised upon the stranger. And to this paper is appended a notification, that any cause of complaint against the postmasters or postillions, if written in the margin, will immediately be examined and remedied by the police. We found no cause of complaint in reference to the posting, or even the custom-house.

Complaints, as to the system of the custom-house on the frontier, are innumerable among the English. And they arise chiefly in reference to books. There are few English travellers who have not their bibles and prayer-books, a few works of private devotion, and others, descriptive of the country through which they travel, or perhaps of amusement or instruction. And, being regarded as a Protestant people, it is assumed by the officials of the Sardinian government that their books are of the same religious tendency; and that if circulated or read, they might infect the people with doubts as to the Romish religion; and they consequently throw every obstacle in the way of the English traveller, so far as his books are concerned. The annoyances to which some persons have been subjected in this particular have been very great; and they seem perhaps still more annoying from the fact that the travellers of other nations are not subjected to them. They are directed especially against the English, and they seem to have arisen either from the conduct of some injudicious persons, who have circulated tracts among the people, or from a fear of the sympathy exhibited so generally for the persecuted Vaudois; or from the spirit of freedom

and independence characteristic of the English, the contagion of which is feared. But from whatever cause the suspicion emanates, it certainly is replete with inconvenience to many persons. One gentleman, a Major in the British Army, was compelled to have his books packed and sealed officially, that they might not be opened, and was further obliged to pay a large deposit of money, to be forfeited in case he opened them while in any part of the Sardinian territories! Another friend of ours, a clergyman of the church of England, found all his books seized and retained! After considerable difficulty he obtained their release, after the officials had examined each volume. The bible, the prayer-book, and one work of devotion they ceded to him, but they strenuously argued that no man could want more than three books on religion! As to the Greek books in his collection, he found the greatest difficulties of all. He was unable to ascertain why they objected against them. They would not avow the reason of their antipathy, and it was long before he was permitted to have them. Another gentleman was deprived of his English bible, and several lost their Italian bibles. Whatever be the real cause of these strange proceedings, the fact is certain, that every copy of the Holy Scriptures is held to be contraband, and seized accordingly. If the name of the owner is written in it, then they will generally permit it to pass, but sometimes even this is not a sufficient security. Thus the English traveller is made to feel, that he is entering a region where the government is under the influence of the Romish priesthood—a land where that priesthood fears the effects of the reading of the Holy Scriptures—a country, where the people are prohibited by the laws, from obtaining religious knowledge from the

purest of all sources—a nation where ignorance, immorality and superstition abound, and where despotism is the character of the government—priestcraft the essential character of the clergy, and abject slavery the inheritance of the people.

Our road lay through Voghera and Novi. We slept at the former, but before daylight had departed, we had an opportunity of witnessing the strange process of pressing the grapes for wine: perhaps the system was peculiar to the district, but it certainly was presented under circumstances not calculated to make us relish the flavour of their vintage. In a large carriage, very similar to the cart of a London dustman, or rather the car of a London scavenger, for the removal of the liquid mud of the streets, was piled a huge mass of purple grapes. It was yoked to two oxen, and, as they slowly drew it through the streets of Voghera, to the houses adjoining our hotel, two men stood within the carriage trampling the grapes. These men seemed, by their dress and whole appearance, very much of the same class as the dustmen or scavengers of London,—as ragged and as dirty. There, without shoes or stockings, and with their nether garments gathered up as high as possible on their legs, they were trampling the ripe and juicy grapes, almost dancing in the gushing mass, now jumping and now treading the pulp; and they continued expressing the red juice in such abundance, that they actually were standing in it while it reached nearly up to their knees. If these men had been clean and smart, or even commonly decent or respectable in their appearance, still the process of making wine by the pressure of their naked feet, would have been anything but a pleasant spectacle to those who were to drink it; but, clothed as they were in dirty rags,

as beggarly as the worst inhabitant of the worst garret or cellar in St. Giles's; and exhibiting unwashed faces and persons filthy beyond description, it was disgusting and loathsome in the extreme. It was enough to make a man register a vow in heaven against wine for the rest of his days, and swear himself a Rechabite for ever.

The road from Pavia to Voghera, and from Voghera to Novi, presents nothing of interest to the traveller who seeks only the picturesque in scenery. The whole country teems with historical associations, especially as connected with the middle ages, of the most lively and thrilling interest; but the district is a wide and level plain. Indeed, the whole line of country extending from Sesto Calende, through Milan and Pavia to Novi, is, in itself, uninteresting. Perhaps our tastes had been spoiled for such scenes. The mountains, the valleys and the lakes of Switzerland, gave us a distaste for the more simple scenery of the plain. And the passage of the Alps, and the shores of the Lago Maggiore, were sufficient to make even a more pleasing region than the plains of Lombardy and Piedmont seem uninteresting in our eyes. And yet it is a rich, fertile, luxuriant, and prosperous district. It is covered with figs, olives, vines, and chesnuts, in the most prodigal luxuriance; clothing everything in the richest verdure. But still, it is a dead level. It was not until we had left Novi behind us, that the scenery became more pleasing. The mountain range, or rather the high lands that form the southern boundary of the plain, and which seem a low branch of the Appennines, rose immediately before us. We now advanced rapidly towards them, the road winding its way through green knolls with shadowy clumps and groves of forest-trees, and among small but thickly-wooded

hills, and thus gradually ascending the range of heights, presenting to the eye at every moment some new view which contrasted pleasantly with the wide and level plains we had left behind us. The road was at the time of our ascent in a wretched state, from long neglect : it was undergoing repairs at the hands of the government ; and although it promises to be, when completed, a magnificent specimen of road-making, yet during the process it was scarcely passable. It was as much as four post-horses and half a dozen men could accomplish, to extricate our carriage from the ruts and holes in the road. This applies only to the ascent on the side of Novi, as the road on the side of Genoa was finished, and in admirable order ; and down this the descent was extremely rapid, and opens a magnificent view of the country, with the waters of the Mediterranean in the distance.

Genoa, however, was not yet visible ; as we advanced, we passed through a most picturesque and romantic country, the fig-trees laden with fruit ; and the vines, now trailed on trellice-work, and now hanging in graceful festoons from tree to tree, seemed bending under the weight of their grapes. The peasants were moving about, all life and gaiety, and teams of oxen were moving in every direction : the villas of the Genoese soon presented themselves to view, gemming the whole line of road for several miles. At a little distance they seem to argue the great riches and luxury of former times ; on a nearer view they bear the most palpable traces of neglect, if not of decay. Some of them are large and handsome, though not in exact accordance with our taste ;—they are often so close together as to preclude the possibility of the retirement and seclusion so essential to the comforts of a villa residence. They seemed

sometimes to have been built with the special design that the inmates of one might keep strict 'watch and ward' over all the movements of the inmates of the other. They are almost universally surrounded by vineyards—having no gardens beyond the little terrace adjoining the house—exhibiting no shrubbery or pleasure-grounds; and wholly without plantation, and therefore without those shady walks that one would deem so great a luxury in that sultry climate, and which even in our less brilliant skies and less scorching suns, constitute so much of the enjoyment of a villa residence. And then they are so unreal:—instead of being built like the palaces they imitate, with noble colonnades and massive balconies, with storied friezes and marble statues, they are too often no more than flat, plain, dead walls, painted with columns, galleries and statues, or so frescoed that some of the noblest-looking residences, seeming like palaces in the distance, are found on a nearer examination to be little better than some unsightly manufactory, some shapeless cotton-mill, coloured over with architectural devices of niches, and columns, so as to look like a palace. All this is the more to be regretted, as nothing can be conceived more suitable for tasteful and elegant villas, than the line of country through which we made our approach to 'the city of palaces.'

But Genoa was still invisible. The road swept around the base of a hill, strongly fortified, and then traversed a promontory shooting out far into the sea, where it forms one arm of the fine bay, within the bosom of which the city is built. On a point of this promontory stands a lighthouse; the road sweeps beside it, and immediately the gate of Genoa presents itself to view. Its approaches are strongly fortified, and bristling with cannon; and, between

the fortified heights on one hand, and the fortified battlements on the other, and the gate in its peculiar position before, it is impossible to catch a glimpse of the city beyond. Over the gate is an image, said to represent the Virgin Mary; and this image, albeit of stone, is said to be the guardian of the city of Genoa. Underneath it is the inscription in large letters, 'Posuerunt me Custodem'—'They have placed me here their guardian.' It certainly is not the Virgin Mary, but only her image of stone—not herself, but only her image, which they have placed over the gate; and, therefore, it might be inferred, that it was not Mary herself, but only her image, that was regarded as the Guardian of Genoa. This was precisely the system in the days of pagan and of classic Italy, when the statues of their heroes or demi-gods were placed near the gates of their cities, and regarded as their guardians. The image and the name of Minerva were exchanged for the image, and the name of Mary. The names are changed, but the thing itself is the same. There, at all events, the image of Mary now stands, to guard the city of Genoa. It has eyes, yet it sees not the approach of the enemy; it has ears, yet it hears not the roar of the artillery; it has a mouth, and yet it can give no alarm of danger. There stands the guardian of Genoa, blind, and deaf, and dumb. And however reverently and devoutly her votaries salute her as they pass beneath it, it may be well suspected, that among the rulers of the city at least, there is more reliance placed on the power of the many cannon that are bristling open-mouthed around her, and which could utter a voice more terrible, and exhibit an energy more destructive, than anything that might be expected from this image of stone.

In a few moments we had passed the gate: and suddenly,

as by the creation of some magic lanthorn, there flashed upon our view one of the most magnificent spectacles of the kind that can be conceived. The City of Palaces rose in all her beauty :—the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean lay sleeping in the sunshine ; the ships of war, and many vessels of this place of commerce, lay anchored in the harbour, their shadows or reflections being as vivid as themselves. The city, arranged along the ascent of the hills, seemed an endless series of terraces, terrace rising over terrace, till lost in the deep verdure of the vines and the fig-trees, the chesnuts and the olives, that crowned the heights, which were gemmed with gardens and villas rising over all, so that as the eye ranged from the shining sea to the crowded shipping, and then over the series of terraces, and so on to the heights waving with woods, and studded with tall towers, and graceful campaniles, it embraced a spectacle that was truly beautiful. It could not fail at any time to awaken a burst of admiration from all capable of appreciating the beautiful ; but opening as it did suddenly on our sight, not gradually revealing itself, but appearing in all its completeness at the moment we turned the projecting point of land, it seemed one of the finest views of the kind we had ever beheld.

It is impossible to visit Genoa for the first time, without being struck with its peculiarities. It stands alone in its character. Its palaces are so numerous and so princely, with their fine colonnades and marble staircases and gilded chambers and pictured galleries, while its streets are so narrow, so very narrow, that it is impossible for any carriage to pass through the greater portion of them. It is far from an unusual process, to measure the width of the street, and then the breadth of the carriage, before the driver will ven-

ture to enter, so that the state of the city gives proof, that as in the olden times the only carriage of Venice was the Gondola ; so the only carriage of Genoa was the Sedan. Nothing larger or wider could even at this day, find an approach to some of the finest mansions, so that the scenes must have been singular and strange, when the wealthy merchants and rich nobles of Genoa, in her palmy days, were carried through these narrow passages, preceded by torch-bearers, and followed by armed retainers, in the times of their feasts and revelry and mutual entertainments. This must have been still more extraordinary in the times of disturbance, when her peace was broken by the violence and contentions of rival factions, when barricades were erected, and chains flung from palace to palace, so as to stop these narrow passages against rivals. Indeed it would seem as if it was this terrible state of faction and violence, so universal in the cities of Italy for many centuries, that has created the style of architecture, especially the domestic architecture, of the Italians. The first or lowest story is generally uninhabited, and built sufficiently strong, with iron bars and massive gratings, to resist any sudden attack of a rival faction ; while some strong tower is attached, to serve as a watch-tower, and at the same time to supply a place of retreat, in case of an enemy's succeeding in forcing an entrance to the mansion. The times of a necessity for all this, have, it may well be hoped, well nigh passed away ; but the taste, the notions of the people on the subject of domestic architecture, have been formed on the models of the past. That which their eyes are used to see, their eyes still wish to see. And all this is as vividly exhibited in Genoa, as in any other city of Italy.

We were superbly lodged : the hotel was once a Palazzo ;

our saloon looked out on the sea—the beautiful sea. The ceiling was richly painted; its deep cornices were elaborately gilded; its height was little less than twenty-four feet; its furniture and hangings were crimson silk of the richest damask; its chairs and sofa did not exhibit the least sign of the material of which they were formed, being thoroughly gilt; the tables were wholly marble. Everything else in our ante-room, bed-room, &c., was in a similar style of splendour; the entrance was white marble; the pillars, balconies, &c., were all white marble: and all spoke the palace rather than the hotel. And yet, for all this splendid accommodation, with attendance in all respects suitable, we were charged less than the ordinary charges of some little inn in a country-town in England!

All this was the more gratifying, as we had arranged to remain for some days in Genoa. Its romantic history interested our feelings; its picturesque character pleased our tastes. It has many galleries of pictures, of which some are by masters whose works are seldom seen elsewhere. It has whole streets of noble palaces; and though they are by no means so commodious, yet are they incomparably more noble in appearance, than the mansions of our English nobility. And wandering from palace to palace, proved no unpleasant occupation for a few days; at least, we so found it, while we waited for the arrival of letters we expected. At all times, the appearance of the streets presented many objects of interest. The number of females, gracefully veiled in the white zendala, and playing with their fans as they flit along the streets—the multitude of monks, ‘black, white, and grey,’ and still more ‘brown,’ passing and re-passing in never-ending succession—the many military, in their brilliant uniforms, exhibiting in their very bearing,

the impress of a military government ; all, whether females, or monks, or soldiers, contrasting finely with the sober attire of the citizens in general, presented a novelty and a character peculiar to the place, and gave, with us at least, an interest to everything, that suited with our recollections of the former glories of Genoa.

We were fully rewarded for our stay in this city, so well deserving its name—*La Superba*. But it is no part of my object to describe those things—pictures—palaces—churches—costumes—manners, that are usually interesting to the stranger. They all are described in the guide-books of travellers and the narrative of tourists. And there I shall leave them.

My object was religion : and when visiting the church of the Annunciation, we observed on its doors an “*Invito Sacro*.” On reading it we found that it was “a sacred invitation” to a certain fête or entertainment, proposed to be given on the following Sunday in the afternoon. It was described as “Vespers with music and a procession.” I had never witnessed any thing of this nature, and though common in every part of Italy, and especially at Rome, yet as I was still a stranger in this land of “religious sights,” I was wholly unable to form any conception of the nature of such scenes ; and, as I had visited Italy in order to witness all the varied phases and accompaniments of the religion of Rome, I at once resolved to avail myself of the opportunity to visit the scene, notice the ceremonies, examine the conduct of the people ; and then, but not till then, form a judgment for myself, as to the nature and effect of such religious spectacles.

We went to the church at the appointed time : it was a noble and magnificent temple : the exterior was wholly unfinished and absolutely unsightly, but the interior exhi-

bited an extent, a richness, and a beauty, rarely to be found, except within the walls of 'the eternal city' herself. The whole church was decorated for the fête, and yet all the decorations of crimson hangings, and wreaths of flowers, and glittering tinsel, seemed pale and dim, as if cast into the shade by the superior brilliancy and splendour of the pillars, and the ceilings, and indeed the arches and the roof of the church. The mass of gold, the fields of blue, of lapis lazuli, the mouldings of white, the gold and silver stars gemming the deep blue; all presented a rich magnificence, which was gorgeous, and yet not so much so as to be inconsistent with taste: each part being perfect in itself, while it was in precise keeping with the whole.

The expenditure lavished by the Italians on some of their churches seems to know no bounds; I say, 'on some of their churches,' for there are many in such a state, as to argue the most gross neglect and entire indifference; the most plain and unadorned and neglected Church in England, is not in a state one half so bad and wretched, as very many of the parochial churches of Italy. There is a wide distinction to be observed between the parochial churches, belonging to the parochial clergy, and the conventual and cathedral churches, belonging to the monastic bodies. The parish churches are generally in a very neglected state; and, though there are many exceptions, yet on the whole, they betray a very marked indifference as to their appearance, wholly opposite to the extravagance of expenditure, exhibited in the conventual and cathedral churches. It is upon these the Italians expend their wealth, till at times they seem to the eye a mass of the most costly magnificence.

The true cause of this distinction arises from the wealth

of the conventual and cathedral clergy. There are connected with some of them, very large and noble endowments, often extensive estates, the produce of which is appropriated to the support of the clergy, connected with the cathedral or church ; so that there are ample funds for the purposes of adornment ; and, besides this, the conventual bodies having no parochial duties like the parochial clergy, are supposed by the simple and credulous, to make to themselves a duty—even the charitable duty of constantly offering masses for the souls of the departed, who are suffering in purgatory. The simple and credulous, believing that the sufferings of their departed friends are lessened as to intensity or shortened as to duration by means of such masses, are ever pouring a stream of money, in the name of offerings, into the treasuries of those conventual and cathedral bodies, in order to secure the benefit of their masses, in the offering of which, the monks represent themselves as constantly engaged. This secures a very ample and most abundant supply of wealth, for the beautifying and adorning the churches belonging to the monks, who take care to teach and encourage the notion, that all offerings towards the beauty and splendour of the church, will secure the value of so many masses, and the efficacy of so many prayers, and confer a proportionate amount of merits on the benefactor, and thus everything is secured that can possibly be required, even for the most lavish and costly adornment. It is mainly owing to these causes, that the conventual and cathedral churches are so magnificent throughout Italy ; the taste of the Italians delights in such costly displays, and Italy offers ample supplies of ancient and modern marbles. But the parish churches are too often, like the parish curé,

left in neglect, in poverty and destitution. They are characterised by the plainness without the neatness, the poor-ness without the cleanliness, of our English churches: and, notwithstanding the opposite impression, so generally prevalent, I am bound to say in all candour and honesty, that the parochial churches of England are, generally speaking, more seemly, more respectable, and in a better and less neglected state than the parochial churches of Italy.

The church of the Annunciation was originally founded and endowed by the munificent piety of a noble family, and is now maintained by those endowments, and the other means to which I have adverted.

When we entered this church to witness ‘the Vespers with music and a procession,’ we were surprised at the extreme irreverence that marked the whole bearing and conduct of the congregation. A very few poor women were kneeling as if in worship, many were seated on benches in conversation, while the great majority of the congregation were walking about the church, talking to each other, laughing together, and acting in a manner irreconcilable to all our English notions of propriety and decency, to say nothing of reverence. We felt offended at this, for though it was a church for Romish worship, a worship against which we had solemnly protested; still the church was dedicated to God, it was thus holy to Him, and invested with a sacredness, of which it could not be deprived. It was with this feeling we entered it, and witnessing the levity, the indifference, the absence of all solemnity and reverence that characterised the congregation, we were shocked and grieved. It seemed a strange thing that Roman Catholics, who coincided with the peculiar forms and principles of worship there, should act with such un-

seemly levity and indecent irreverence, while English Protestants were pained and distressed, though they could not concur in either the principles or the forms of worship peculiar to the place.

It is not easy to describe the scene. We were seated on a bench from which we could at our ease survey all that passed. And as soldiers in their brilliant uniforms, civilians in their shewiest attire, young girls in their zendalas, monks in their sombre dresses, all moved before us and chatted and made a regular promenade of the church, as if utterly indifferent to the religious character of the place, while we were looking and wondering at all, a respectable-looking woman took her seat beside us ; she seemed rapt in devotion for some moments, repeated her prayers in a gently audible tone, and then silyly slipped her hand before me, and asked for money, for the love of the blessed Virgin ! She would not take a refusal gently given, but persevered, so we removed to another place to avoid her. Here we observed the mass of people assembling fast, and as we were seated and observing all that passed, we perceived a woman on her knees behind us, her prayers were uttered with rapidity, and in a tone sufficiently loud for us to hear. We were unwilling to disturb her extreme devotion, by turning to look at her, especially remembering the former instance ; when after some time she tapped me on the shoulder, and slipped her hand between us with a look which there could be no mistaking, even if she had not whispered a request for money to relieve her poverty, all for the honor of the Most Holy Virgin ! This was sufficiently amazing, and indeed argued a low hypocrisy in the beggars, making themselves remarkable in the congregation, by being the only persons kneeling and praying, when the

real object was evidently to move compassion, by the appearance of devotion ; and then to beg money unexpectedly. As she would not leave us, we took occasion to leave her, and so proceeded to move along the church among the crowd of persons. We soon stopped and stood in the centre of the church, and were observing the bright and lively appearance of the congregation, as they passed by and around us, when we were more particularly struck by the conduct of the monks. There were many of them there, some chatting with young men, some conversing with young women, others standing in groups, or strolling two or three together, up and down the church, as in a public parade. I had expected to see a religious, solemn, reverent air pervading the conduct of monks : I had imagined that the sober gravity that always would characterize, or at least, is expected to characterize, the conduct of a clergyman in an English church, would also characterize the bearing of the monks. Indeed I anticipated that this would be carried to extremes among them, especially as they appeared in their monkish garb ; but I must confess that our astonishment was extreme, when we observed these men chatting, laughing, and promenading with as much levity, as the youngest and gayest of the congregation. It was a very painful sight to our feelings ; revolting every sense of propriety and decency, to say nothing of religion or reverence. But while we thus stood in the very centre of the church, and were at the moment looking at something going on at the altar, a man knelt beside us, as is usual in their churches. We paid him no particular attention, till his audibly-uttered prayers reached our ears, and when this devout worshipper, who at first interested us by his humility, and pleased us by his disregarding the

shame of being seen on his knees, among so many who seemed to be thinking of anything rather than prayer,—when he perceived us listening to his prayers, he most adroitly turned them into a petition for money, still holding the same devout position, as if not minding us; and still continuing the same tone of voice, so as to be unobserved by others, he actually turned his prayer to God, into a prayer to us, and changed his petition for forgiveness from God, into a petition for money from us, all for the love and honor of the Mother of God! There was a cunning and hypocrisy in this—for he did everything so as not to be observed by others as begging, it being forbidden by the law—that most thoroughly disgusted us.

The church was brilliantly and splendidly lighted, and no ordinary taste was exhibited in the arrangements. The services soon commenced. The religious portion of ‘the entertainment’ is easily described. There were the vespers chanted in the usual manner, by several priests. Three of them officiated before the altar, the others responded from the sides of the altar, where they were arranged as in a choir. They performed their parts very quietly, being seated the greater portion of the time: and seemed to be performing some ceremonies in which themselves alone were interested; at least, the vast congregation seemed to take no interest whatever in the services, and certainly shewed no outward mark of attention to anything but the music: there being not the slightest response from the congregation to any part of the service. During the pauses in the services, there were several splendid interludes, or perhaps more strictly speaking, operatic music of the very highest order. Nothing I had ever heard in the way of music surpassed it; but, it was precisely that which may

be heard at the opera, and certainly is not often heard elsewhere. Some of the pieces were very grand, some were very sweet and pretty, some were very lively and sparkling. Everything, the brilliant lights, the shining dresses, the conversation, the promenade, the gallantry, the coquetry, and especially the character of the music, threw over all the tone and style of some musical entertainment at a theatre; and at times there flashed across my mind, the promenade in Kensington gardens, when the military band was there; all was as brilliant, as merry, and as gay. I looked carefully throughout the church, while the priests were in the act of officiating, and I could observe but one man kneeling, and one woman leaning on a chair in a half-kneeling posture! Throughout the whole assembly, though congregated in a temple of religion—though in the presence of the robed priests of their religion—though before their eyes was performing the Vesper service—the very last thought that seemed associated in the mind of any was, the thought of religion. We felt that we might as well be at the Opera.

Occasionally, however, during all this, several monks with their faces masked or covered, passed with bags at the end of long poles, which they shook in the faces of every person, to remind them to give a contribution to the convent. As this process was repeated three or four times throughout the services, and as many persons seemed to give a trifle, some small amount must have been collected.

This entertainment continued for some hours. ‘The Vespers’ were concluded; we only waited for ‘the Procession.’ The curtain, that was extended across the choir behind the altar, was suddenly drawn back, and eight monks with their shaven heads, and brown dresses, and sandalled

feet, issued from behind the altar, each holding a blazing torch. This was managed in a very theatrical way, and produced a striking effect ; it was quite new to my inexperienced eyes, and it seemed like something I had read in tales of the olden time. The monks, eight in number, stood at a little distance before the altar, their backs to the people, and their faces to the altar. They held their flaming torches aloft ; these were wax candles of enormous size, fully as thick as a man's wrist, and with such a mass of wick as displayed a prodigious flame. And then, as a priest ascended by steps to the altar, and brought forth the Ostensaria, with the Consecrated Host in it ; and as another priest exhibited it for the adoration of the people, (it was the only moment that gave a character of religion to the scene) the eight monks knelt and adored : and the whole congregation bowed or knelt for a moment : and then, as they arose, the monks, priests, and attendants, suddenly left the altar, passed down the church, placed the Host on one of the side-altars—knelt before it,—resumed the Host, and in the same way returned to the altar as before. In a few moments, the candles were extinguished, and the congregation dispersed.

We returned to our hotel, saddened at so gross a desecration of the sabbath ; astonished at so strange a corruption of religion ; and feeling how deeply thankful we should be for the holy occupations of an English sabbath, and the beautiful and touching simplicity of our Protestant services.

The more we reflected on this scene of ' Vespers with music and a procession,' the more strongly we felt all our convictions struggling against it. Since then, we have witnessed others, so as to be sure to make no mistake as to their real character and tendency ; and the same impress

seems stamped upon all. It seems an attempt on the part of the monks, to take the field in rivalry with the actors—to make the music of the church to rival the music of the opera, and perform an entertainment in the church to outshine the entertainment in the theatre. I am scarcely a competent judge as to the success of their scheme, or as to the amount of money received; but this I can say most decidedly, that there was as little of the spirit or appearance of religion in the ‘Vespers with music and a procession,’ in the church, as there could be in any melo-drama in a theatre.

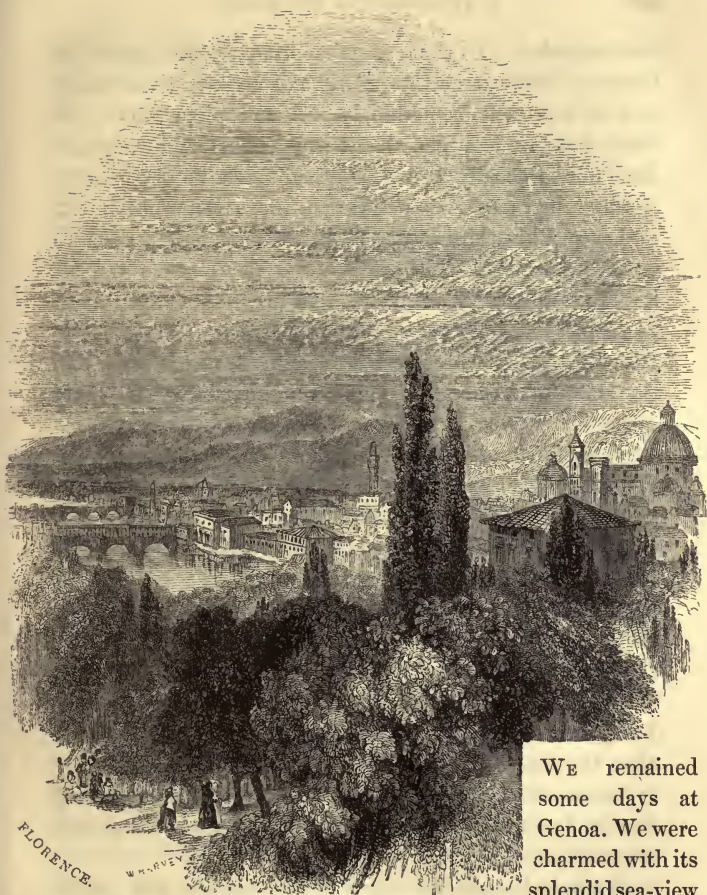
It may be objected to this censure, that it bears upon the cathedral-services of the Church of England, as much as upon ‘the Vespers with music,’ in the Church of Rome. It may do so in a small degree, but if the musical entertainments of the two churches are to be judged by their effects on the congregations, there will be at least some important difference between them. In London, there may be a throng of persons, eager, listening, sighing for a long anthem, and a short sermon—watching with breathless anxiety for the announcement of the words of the anthem, but not for the text of the sermon; and eagerly inquiring the name of the performer who is to sing, though very indifferent to the clergyman who is to preach. These persons go, not to worship God, but to hear music; and not hear the word of God, but to listen to the voices of singers. All this is bad—very bad, though too frequent in the cathedral congregations of England. But still, with all this, there is some decency of demeanour, some reverence for the place, some regard to the forms, if not to the reality, of worship. But in Genoa, the congregation made an afternoon-promenade of the body of the

church ; and both before and during the service, all classes of persons, priests, monks, soldiers, men, women, youths, maidens, laughed, chatted, walked from the altar to the doors, and from the doors to the altar, as in a public parade. There was praying at the altar, no one heeded it. There was reading at the altar, no one attended to it. There was music and singing, and according as the music pleased, or the voices charmed, they stopped their promenade, or hushed their laughter, and listened : but the thought of religion seemed never to have entered the mind of any one. This, it must be admitted, is widely different from the conduct of a congregation in an English cathedral.

But still there is one great and master-evil in the system, an evil too, which seems inseparable from it. The practice of singing, chanting, intoning the service, renders that service in a great degree unintelligible. It requires always a considerable effort to follow the officiating minister ; and, in consequence, the edification the worshipper ought to derive from the service, is proportionably diminished, if not utterly lost. The effect that *is* produced, is the effect of the music on the feelings, rather than the effect of the service on the soul. It is the dreamy reverie of the imagination, awakened by the strains of harmony, whether in the cathedral or the opera ; and not the healthy and hallowing awakening of the mind to the high resolves of practical righteousness, which the services themselves are calculated to produce. And this unintelligibility of the services so sung or chanted, leads gradually to the idea, that the services of the cathedral are services performed *for* the people, and not *by* the people ; are ceremonies performed by officials *before* the congregation and *for* them, instead of a worship *of* the congregation and *by* them.

CHAPTER III.

DEPARTURE FROM GENOA—THE ROAD TO CHIAVARI—AN EVENING AT
CHIAVARI—ARRIVAL AT LUCCA—THE SERVICES OF THE CATHEDRAL
—MIRACULOUS IMAGE—OTHER TREASURES OF THE DUOMO—IMAGE
OF CHRIST AND PICTURE OF MARY—THE STATE OF TUSCANY—THE
ATTRACTIONS OF FLORENCE—BEATO ANGELICO AND PIETRO PERUGINO
—EFFECT OF “THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL” ON THE MIND—THE TEN-
DENCY OF THE RELIGION OF ROME—THE DIFFERENT EFFECTS OF
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE IN THIS RESPECT.



WE remained
some days at
Genoa. We were
charmed with its
splendid sea-view

and its wooded heights—its palaces and its churches—its curious streets, and its magnificent promenade on the ramparts—and we were pleased with the picturesque effect of the monks with their cowls and their beards, and the young maidens with their fans and

their zendalas. To the eye of a stranger, the aspect of Genoa will always be interesting and striking; and every part of it presents something novel and picturesque. It was not till we had seen all the usual sights, and examined some not so usually visited, and had taken the opportunity of observing, as far as permitted, the style of both the higher and the lower classes of the population, that we ordered our horses and bade farewell to Genoa. We left it with full acknowledgment, that we had derived both pleasure and information from our visit, and that we felt the peculiar characteristics—and they are many—of this city of palaces, to be deeply interesting and very attractive.

So far however as the main object of our pilgrimage was concerned, there was little to be learned. The lavish expenditure exhibited in the decoration of the churches—the total absence of a pious and devotional feeling in their services—the numbers and variety of the monks, appearing in every place of public resort and public amusement, all combined to leave an impression rather unfavourable to the religion of Italy on my mind. I felt however that it was as yet too soon to judge, and that the results which had been seen, might perhaps prove to be the abuse, rather than the use of the system. But I love a simple worship. “God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth.” Simplicity well becomes such a worship.

We have bidden farewell to Genoa, and are now on the road to Chiavari. A more lovely drive for its distance, about thirty miles, is not in the world. It passes along the shores of the Mediterranean, now sweeping along its sands, till it is almost washed by the waves, and then ascending

some lofty height, traversing the very verge of some towering precipice, where a false step would hurl carriage and horses down an abyss of many hundred feet into the sea. It is a glorious thing to look out from these lofty cliffs upon the blue waters,—to see their bosoms heave and swell like a thing of life,—to look upon this far-reaching expanse, with many a vessel spreading its sails over the shining waters, and to look out upon all this under a sky of the purest and clearest blue, and from beneath the deepest shadows of rich and luxuriant foliage. There was the rich scenery of hills and vallies : there was the vine hanging in its graceful festoons of greenest luxuriance. There were clusterings of grapes that would seduce a Rechabite. There were fig-trees absolutely oppressed by the burden of their fruits. There were myrtles as dense and as large as our island hawthorn, hedging the road. There were retired, sequestered-looking villages studding the little creeks and recesses of the shore. There were innumerable villas built on every picturesque position, and making it still more picturesque. There were the tall campaniles of churches, and the lofty towers of convents. There were the ruins of ancient castles, once the wild homes of corsairs. In short, there was all that the imagination could create or the taste desire, giving a magical charm to the whole scene—a charm that it is impossible to describe. It was truly—exquisitely beautiful : and yet strange scenes were once transacted along the whole shore from Genoa to Pisa. It was in the days when the Saracens swept the waters—when the galleys of Venice and of Pisa traversed the seas—when the Arabs launched their ships in the harbours of Spain—when corsairs started from the coast of Barbary, and pirates built their nests among the wooded

shores of Italy—even when the seas were alive with the navies of Genoa—it was then that many a dark and terrible tragedy was acted along these shores and among these beauteous scenes. There, in that sweet-sequestered spot, where the shore makes a bend, and the white houses seem to stand upon the very edge of the water and yet to be enveloped in foliage—there, a little—a very little way before us, is Rapallo—beautiful Rapallo. It seems to sleep away its time in that little nook, amidst scenes that might constitute another Paradise. The popular romances and legends still cherished in the place, state that it was thus with it long ago. There was one soft, balmy, delicious night. The waters of the sea were still and tranquil as a sleeping infant. There was not a breath of air in the heavens above. There was not a leaf stirring on the earth beneath. And Rapallo, with all its quiet villagers, slept away the midnight hour. Suddenly there was heard the splash of many oars, and many galleys neared the shore. They landed on that point of land, now covered with trees and groves of oranges and lemons. And there was a cry—a struggle—a shriek that seemed to find an echo of an hundred reverberations. But it died away, and the young, and the gentle, and the lovely were gone, far—far away from their village home, the slaves—the worse than slaves to the corsair.

We were so charmed with some of these beautiful scenes, that we resolved to linger among them, for as we travelled by post we were enabled to stop where we pleased. We therefore, determined to order no more horses for that day, but to remain at Chiavari. Nothing can be more picturesque than Chiavari, especially as viewed from the sea. The spires or campaniles of the churches and convents—the

towers of ruined castles—the handsome villas, make it a charming scene. But it is far otherwise on entering the streets. It is unhappily too true here, as in most places in Italy, that there are many things which look best at a distance. At times we have seen noble villas that looked like palaces—columns of alabaster—balconies of marble—porticos of richest tracery in the finest carrara—windows with most elaborate mullions of porphyry—all presenting a magnificent and princely appearance, but alas! on a closer acquaintance, all these architectural decorations of alabaster and marble and porphyry, proved but plastered walls, painted to imitate a palace! Nothing can be imagined more pitiable. But groves of oranges cannot, and need not to be imitated, nor trellice-work interwoven with limes, and cypress, and palms, and myrtles, which all flourished in the richest exuberance.

We wandered about this interesting place during the evening. There were long promenades shaded by trees, that looked neglected and deserted, as if they were wrecks of better or at least gayer times. They seemed as if they had known brighter days, when the young and the lovely flitted along those walks, or sauntered beneath the shadow of these trees. And now, all looked deserted and sad. And yet it was a most attractive scene, especially by the sea-shore. That evening the waters of the Mediterranean lay calm and still. There was just enough of motion to shew it was no mirror, but the deep, deep sea. The long low murmur of its waters, as each rippling wave rolled along the sands and almost bathed our feet, was music in our ears. When last we heard such sounds, it was far—far away, among the happy scenes of Devonshire: and now we stand upon the shores of the Mediterranean. The

view of Chiavari, as seen from the sea, is very pleasing. The spires, the towers, the many pinnacles shewing their white points above the dark foliage, gave almost a Moorish character to the place, and then as the innumerable bells from church and convent began to ring, and the whole air seemed full of their pealing as it came floating from the distance, it awakened thoughts of Moorish times, and we could not but admire the custom still so prevalent in Spain and Portugal, but now almost faded away from Italy. However the aged or the young are engaged, whether in the promenade, or the dance, or at the festive board, or in converse, when they hear the bell that tolls the hour of Ave Maria, they pause, droop the head and breathe the Ave or some such prayer in silence. This custom may have been perverted to evil. It may have been superstitious among the Mahometans. It may have been idolatrous among the Romanists; but it originated in a holy and beautiful feeling, and if indeed it were adopted among us to recognise the presence of the Eternal—to uncover the head and breathe a word of praise for the mercies of the past day or of prayer for mercies during the coming night, it would be a custom both beautiful and holy.

It was late, when we returned to our albergo. The waters of the sea, the leaves of the forest, the breath of heaven, the whole scenery above, beneath, and around Chiavari was peaceful. All was peaceful but our slumbers. Those enemies of all peace—the musquitos, made their first onslaught upon us. It was their first attack, and happily it proved the last during our residence in Italy.

We left Chiavari, and continued our pilgrimage along this charming road. We were perfectly fascinated by Rapallo, Sestri, Spezzia and those villages that lie em-

bowered among these delicious scenes along the shores of the Mediterranean. We could have lingered long and happily among them. We visited the marble quarries of Carrara, the fruitful womb of some of the noblest sculptures in the world. We remained some days with great enjoyment at the baths of Lucca, and there found repose among the dark shadows of the forests of chesnuts. We proceeded to Pisa, to look upon the Duomo—to ascend its leaning tower, and to walk in the cloisters of its Campo Santo, and there to look upon its walls storied with its wonderful frescoes—to think of the scenes of the Holy Land, trod by the Saviour's feet and watered by the Saviour's blood, from which the soil of the Campo Santo is said to have been brought—and to meditate within those long cloisters on the high and solemn things that place of the dead so naturally suggests. We also visited the city of Lucca;—and here I pause for a moment.

We visited the Duomo or Cathedral of Lucca; a service was performing as we entered, and no less than sixteen priests took part in its performance. The performers were *sixteen priests*; and the spectators—for I cannot call them worshippers—were only *two persons*, exclusive of ourselves!

We visited it again the next morning, under the impression that we had seen it at an unfavourable hour; and we therefore attended at the hour of the morning when the mass is celebrating, and the largest congregations usually attend. There were three masses performing, by three priests, at their different altars, at one and the same moment. At one of these, there were *three* worshippers; at the second, there were *two* worshippers: and at the third, there were *four* persons worshipping; so that, although there were three priests with their three masses, and their

three attendant boys at the altars, yet the whole assembled congregations amounted to no more than *nine* persons !

At the conclusion of all these three masses, the priests retired, and soon appeared again with others ; forming altogether, the number of ten priests. They proceeded to one of the altars, and commenced some service, which seemed to me to be devoutly attended to by two of the number, but most irreverently performed by the others. On this occasion, not one creature except my wife and myself, went near them or listened to them ! All this seemed to us surpassingly strange. There were so many priests—so many masses—so many services ; and yet so few in the city of Lucca—so few in this land of religion—so few in this place of devotion to the Church of Rome, appearing to take the least interest in these services which are supposed to be so highly valued. We could not account for such complete desertion : for though in many places we had observed that the numbers were not one-tenth of those we had expected, yet all was solitude in the Cathedral of Lucca. It recalled to memory some scenes we had witnessed in the Cathedrals of Exeter, Salisbury, York and Durham ; the recollection of which obliged us to admit that this absurd waste of clerical time, clerical strength, and clerical mind, is not peculiar to Italy or the religion of Italy. If these clergymen would devote their hours to the study of the Scriptures—to preparation for the pulpit—and to visiting the sick and the needy, in the exercise of a Christian benevolence, they would be making a more profitable use of the talents which God has given them ; than in performing services to the lifeless pillars, and soulless arches, and mouldering walls of their cathedrals.

The Sacristan, or official of the cathedral, who accom-

panied us in our inspection of the building, was a remarkable and pleasing example of his class; he was an old man, crabbed and withered in appearance, but a very enthusiast in his office. There entered into the composition of the little man, a dash of enthusiasm for architecture—an ample supply of pedantry, and a positive love that actually doated on every stone, pillar, painting, monument, everything in the vast pile. And his utmost delight seemed to consist in having opportunity for dilating on the marvels of his cathedral, which he solemnly declared to be without parallel, and the most wonderful in the world. In his eyes, there was nothing but the tower of Babel to compare with it in interest; and the pyramids of Egypt and St. Peter's at Rome were not to be named in comparison with it. After all, there is a great charm in enthusiasm, so great as to throw a new interest even over the petty details of the building. On he went, from object to object, actually excited with pleasure, and seemingly impatient at the interruptions he received at the ringing of the little bells, whenever the Host was elevated at the various masses then performing. He used rapidly, at such moments, to bend the knee in the midst of his disquisitions, and then continue as before, thinking it a sad interruption to his erudite discourses, and a great hindrance to our instruction.

There is something, or the absence of something, in the churches of Italy, that renders the effect produced on the mind, incomparably inferior to that produced by the cathedrals of England. It is scarcely possible to tread in solitude and silence, the long aisles of our Gothic churches, and remain unmoved. There is scarce a trace of the same feeling, or anything analogous to it, when pacing the finest churches of Italy; at least, such was our experience.

The cathedral is a heavy and massive pile, and certainly did not excite in me any ardent admiration. I gave but a cold response to the warm enthusiasm of the man. There were some things however not irrelevant to the object of our pilgrimage.

The first was a remarkable picture. To this picture is appended an inscription ; it sets forth for the instruction of the good people of Lucca, that after the ascension of our Lord at the Mount of Olives, he sent an angel to Nicodemus, with a special command, *to make an image of our Lord !* In obedience to this command, repealing the second commandment of the decalogue, the faithful Nicodemus proceeded to hew the trunk of a tree into the form of the proposed image. He found some difficulty in making the face, and fell asleep, but most conveniently, on awaking, he found that the divine power had descended, and perfected the image by miraculously adding a true likeness for the face ! There is an altar erected in the cathedral to this image, and the miraculous face itself, or a copy of the miraculous face,—for I cannot determine which, is shown under the altar. I carefully examined it, immediately after a poor woman had devoutly worshipped it.

The second treasure of this cathedral, is seen beside the altar of this image ; it is a curious and precious relic, the history of which is no less miraculous, than that of the image of our Lord. It is an executioner's axe, enshrined in a glass case ; an inscription,—the truth of which was confirmed by the Sacristan,—sets forth that some holy man, i.e., some monk or friar, was accused, tried, convicted, and sentenced to death for some crime. On the executioner's raising the axe to strike, the edge miraculously turned away from the neck of the convict ; on his second

attempt, the axe again miraculously turned away and refused to strike : on the third attempt, the axe miraculously declined the office altogether ! Such a miracle was held by the universal voice of the monks and friars, to prove the innocence of the man ; and the marvellous axe is now enshrined in glass, and preserved as a precious relic in the cathedral. In the gallery at Venice, there is a picture representing a somewhat similar miracle ; all the instruments of execution were scattered and broken in pieces, miraculously refusing to discharge their office. I differed from the Sacristan, as to the miraculous nature of the circumstance ; suggesting that the executioner was probably friendly to the convict, and so was unwilling to strike.

The third object in this cathedral, which deserves a record, is an image or statue. It is a fine spirited figure, and may have been an Apollo, or an Adonis, or any other god or man of the heathen. The priests however have re-named it, and have erected it on one of their altars, and given it the name of " Christ as he rose from the dead." There is neither attitude, nor expression, nor anything else to justify such an appellation ; however, there it stands to represent the resurrection of our Lord. The statue was placed by the people of Lucca in its present position, to commemorate the deliverance of the city from the plague ; and the priests gave it its present name, thinking it as good and as suitable as any other. It is flanked by two other figures ; one of St. Peter, the other St. Paul, in a mitre and episcopal robe ; not however the St. Paul of scripture, but another Paul who was first bishop of Lucca ; though how he could have been at the resurrection of our Lord, is a matter of some perplexity, as he was not born

at the time. This kind of anachronism however is nothing unusual in Italy. Over all is an inscription as follows :

CHRISTO
LIBERATORI,
AC DIVIS
TUTELARIBUS.

It was thus erected ‘ To Christ the deliverer, and to the tutelary Gods,’ I asked the Sacristan who were ‘ the tutelary GODS.’ And he immediately replied, The Saints. I have met a heathen inscription as follows :—

MERCURIO AC MINERVÆ
DII TUTELARIBUS.

Thus Mercury and Minerva were the *Dii tutelares*, ‘ the tutelary Gods ’ of heathen Italy, and now Peter and Paul have been adopted in their stead, as ‘ the tutelary Gods ’ of Papal Italy. It looks as if the religion was essentially the same, the names alone being changed. In the vicinity of Florence and of Rome, the observant traveller will frequently observe altars to St. Romulus and St. Remus, or, as they call them, Romulo and Remigio, in accordance with the forms of the Italians. The priests have assured me that these were the names of some very holy and ancient bishops, who are venerated in the churches for their piety : the impression however on our mind was, that they are only a christianising the heathen traditions of the ancients, and that Romulus and Remus, once worshipped by the heathens as the founders of empires, are now worshipped by christians as the founders of bishoprics ! The priests found the people addicted traditionally to the worship of these heathen demigods, and so adroitly turned them into christian saints.

I have been led into all this by our visit to the cathedral

of Lucca, and cannot now stay my course ; the image of Christ already described as carved in wood by Nicodemus, *with a face miraculously added*, is rivalled by a picture of the Virgin Mary in the Annunciata at Florence ; where an inscription on the wall states that when the artist Bartolomeo painted the drapery, *the face of the Virgin was miraculously painted by God*. There is no miracle connected with our Lord that has not its parallel attributed to Mary, and as a face was miraculously supplied to the image of Christ at Lucca, so as a rival, a face was miraculously supplied to this picture of Mary at Florence. The truth in both these cases seems to be, that our Lord's face in the image, and the Virgin's face in the picture, were represented by the priests as such perfect likenesses, as to be regarded as 'miracles of art;' and the crafty monks and cunning friars soon turned the expression into a miracle of Divine power. The more we see of these men the more they sink in our estimation; for there is no apology for the gross and impudent deceptions which they practice upon the people, *for their own pecuniary advantage*.

After devoting some days to Lucca, and the Bagni de Lucca, we proceeded to Florence. Of all the cities of Italy, it is perhaps the most attractive to English tastes ; at least there is more at Florence than in any one city elsewhere, to make it a desirable residence.

If I could depart from the one special purpose, which was the cause and object of our pilgrimage, it would be to describe the paternal government of Tuscany ; the fine cultivation of its territory ; the peaceful and happy state of its population ; the joyous and laughing scenes of the vintage ; the richness and verdure of the country, adorned by the vines hanging in graceful festoons from tree to tree ;

the waggons loaded with grapes and drawn by oxen white as snow, tossing their heads as they move amidst the vines; all these, combined with the joyous and merry looks of a thriving peasantry, gave a very pleasant impression of the country, even before we entered upon the enjoyments of the city of Florence.

So alluring and seductive did these prove, that we delayed in "La Bella Florenza" for some weeks: and even Rome herself, that object of our pilgrimage, was forgotten for awhile. How true a type of the manner in which we are allured and seduced to linger, amidst the pleasures of this world, till we almost, if not altogether, forget, "that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," to which our true pilgrimage ought to be directed.

There were some thoughts, however, connected with the objects of our present pilgrimage, which were suggested by a class of paintings,—those of 'the religious school,' which first impressed me during our visit to Florence. I shall describe them.

There are few subjects on which I am so little competent to express an opinion as painting. To quote names, from Cimabue to Raphael, and from Raphael to the last votary of the gentle science, were comparatively an easy matter, and few things are more easy than to deceive the mass of mankind, by an affectation of taste and knowledge on the subject. Any one who has visited Italy, with the most ordinary opportunities, and a little leisure for a frequent visitation and close examination of its many galleries, can scarcely fail to catch so much of the peculiar style of the great masters, to be able to recognise their works amidst a world of others, and to make a show of such an acquaintance with the subject as may surprise those who

have not possessed the same opportunities. There may be along with this a power of instantly recognising the touch of an artist, a capacity for at once pronouncing the age of the work, a cleverness in estimating its true value, as a marketable article : and yet no real love, no true taste, and no natural enthusiasm for the art. There is often a practical knowledge of the artistical, and yet no innate perception of the beautiful. Happily it does not fall in with the object of this our present pilgrimage, to criticise the exquisite paintings we have witnessed, or for me to pretend to a knowledge and a taste of which I am not possessed. And therefore I shall only say that there are pictures in Italy, which infinitely surpassed all my previous imaginings of perfection in the art.

There is however one school, or rather one style of painting, to which I was first introduced at Florence, and which has always found a response from my inner nature—such a response as is not easily described, and is more allied to the mystical or superstitious than I could have supposed. I allude to the works of Giotto, Pinturicchio, Beato Angelico, Pietro Perugino, Francia, and the early works of Raphael—those who have been called, the ‘religious school.’ Perhaps Luca Signorelli and Razzi might be added to the number, but Beato Angelico and Pietro Perugino carried that to which I especially refer to the highest point, or at least exerted a greater influence on my taste and feelings than any other. I never looked at one of the pictures of these men that it did not instantaneously affect me, alluring me into a sort of dream or reverie, while my imagination was called into very lively activity. It is not that their drawing is good, for on the other hand it is often stiff, awkward and unnatural. Nor is it that their

imagination, as exhibited in grouping their figures or embodying the story to be represented, was correct or natural, for often it is most absurd and grotesque, but still there is palpably the embodiment of an idea—an idea pure, holy, exquisite, and too much so to seem capable of expression by the ordinary powers either of language or of the pencil. Yet the idea is there. And it must have had a mysterious and wondrous power on the imaginations of these two men—it must have thoroughly mastered and possessed them, or they never could have developed such an exquisite ideal of calm, peaceful, meek, heavenly holiness, as stands out so constantly and so pre-eminently in their paintings.

It would be impertinent for me to enter on an analysis of my feeling respecting them, or my own explanation as to the cause of the peculiar power they exercised over my imagination. But certainly they seemed to embody that ideal of quiet, pure, gentle, holiness, which may well be supposed to be the ideal of perfection, associated with the life of contemplation and solitude, and converse with heaven alone, so fondly cherished by the more holy but more visionary—by the more religious but more imaginative and dreamy of the recluses and anchorites of former ages. As such men, themselves meek, humble and subdued, created imaginary scenes and peopled them with spirits of mortal form, they might very naturally have created beings endowed with those graces, and exhibiting those virtues that constituted their ideal of a saint—their ideal of what a christian might wish to be. It is palpable that such creatures—such christians, if real, would be unfit for a world like this. They might suit our recovered Paradise, and be fitting inhabitants of “the better land,” but would be too pure, too spiritual, too heavenly to eat and drink and

sleep, and toil in this world of passion. They are exquisitely passionless and motionless, and seem as if they could hear nothing but the music of the harps of heaven, as if they could see nothing but the holiness of the skies, and as if they could feel nothing but the happiness and peace of paradise. All this might very naturally enter into the ideal of a saint—the ideal of a christian in the imagination of those solitary and imaginative recluses, who used to retire from the busy scenes of earthly usefulness and brotherly benevolence, to live a life of solitude and contemplation. There was a soft and sweet luxury of indolence in such a life, that might not unnaturally create such an ideal as this. And from this I believe it to have sprung. The age of these paintings was the palmiest age of cloisters and recluses.

One of these, so well known by his appellation of Beato Angelico, given to him as expressive of his blessed and angelic disposition, seems himself almost to have realised in his own person this ideal of a saint. He was a monk, one of those who loved the retirement and contemplation of the cloister more than the busy hum and bustle of the world. There, among the companions of the convent, he devoted himself to his favourite occupation of painting. It was in the convent of St. Mark at Florence, and there yet remains in fresco on the wall of one very small apartment in the convent, a representation of our Lord crowning the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven. The face and attitude of Mary is the most exquisite production of the pencil that can be conceived. It is said of him that he was a man of piety and of prayer—that he never painted for money—that his great object was the glory of God—that he thought his talent for painting ought to be devoted to

illustrate the things of heaven—and that he never commenced painting without prayer that it might be to the glory of God. A man so pure and holy, as he is described to have been, may be well expected to embody on canvass some representation of the ideal that was formed in his own mind. But it seems to have been far otherwise with Pietro Perugino. His character was of a far different complexion. He painted for money, and if report speak truly, made many a hard bargain for his productions; so that it is not so easy to understand his power over his pencil, for the production of creations, that could have had no corresponding image in his heart, however they may have had a place in his imagination. Be this however as it may, the productions of both these men are wholly unrivalled in that which, to my poor judgment, as having no knowledge of the artistical, is their great charm and peculiar excellence. It is true that their angels are often most unpicturesquely playing on fiddles, and seem most strangely skating through the air. And their saints and warriors and maidens seem as awkward and as stiff as possible, yet are they all endowed with an expression so modest, so gentle, and so holy, that they seem only fit for heaven, while at the same time when a Judas or a Rabbi is introduced, there is no want of a power to impress the suitable expression. The adoring expression with which some look on the infant Jesus in the arms of the Virgin, and the gaze of reverence with which others regard the dead Christ when taking down from the cross, are exquisite triumphs of genius, as well as types of a reverential and adoring spirit. And such is the general and powerful effect of those pictures on my nature, that I never contemplate them without being drawn toward that kind of recluse and contemplative

religion, which they designed to embody, and to be all the less fitted for that active and stirring benevolence, which is an essential of a living christianity.

It was this effect of these remarkable pictures, on my own state of religious feeling, that first awakened me to a consciousness of the tendencies of at least this school of painting, to draw and allure the mind by scarcely sensible degrees, toward that tone of feeling that so well consorts with some phases of the religion of Rome. It was my own, my personal experience, or I should have been very slow indeed to believe it. I had previously no idea—I could not conceive how painting could possibly exercise an influence almost magical, in alluring and seducing some persons to the church of Rome. And it was not till I examined my own feelings, that I could comprehend what till then had always seemed to me to be a mystery. I witnessed other persons of far finer taste and more easily susceptible feelings, turn away from these paintings without the least effect on their tastes or feelings analogous to my own. They did not like the drawing, they objected to the colouring, they laughed at the stiffness of the figures, they amused themselves with the unvaried expression of the faces—the total absence of those tempers, passions, characters, that are unceasingly exhibited in the history of a life. In fact, they observed that there was the absence of all the expressions usually seen in the human face, and the presence of a type of character as unusual as it is unfitted for the life of earth. The truth seemed to me to be, that such persons were looking for earthly creatures and found heavenly ones, and, expecting unholy expressions, were disappointed at finding none but the holy. At all events there was no response in their

hearts to the paintings before them, and if they admired them, it was only as happy or interesting illustrations of the style of their masters and of the age of their production.

This temptation to Mediæval religion, so alluring and attractive to some minds, and so closely allied to the church of Rome, that one is almost certain to lead to the other, is not without other appliances to strengthen it. The constancy with which the pictures of the Virgin Mary are obtruded on the eye—the frequency with which certain favourite saints are called to mind by the paintings of the finest artists—all tend to fix the memory of them on the mind. They become indelibly engraven on the memory, so that whether or no a man remembers God, he certainly remembers Mary and the saints. An appeal may be made to the actual experience of any one who has lived much in Italy, and especially in Rome, whether it is not a fact that while he can forget God, he cannot forget Mary and the saints, and that let him go where he will, or live as he may, there is not an hour of his existence in which the Madonna is not presented to his eye and forced upon his attention. This utter oblivion of God, along with the warmest devotion to Mary, is by no means uncommon among Italians. And as the very best paintings—the finest works of the ablest masters, are devoted to the exhibition of the Madonna, and to the illustrations of the saints and ceremonies and miracles and legends of the church of Rome, so all these are unceasingly on the mind and memory under circumstances that constrain us to admire them. An admiration of a painting—an admiration of the mode of representing its subject, will often lead to a sympathy with the subject itself, and perhaps to an adoption of it in the mind. And thus the temptation to

a Mediæval religion, has other appliances in the subject of so many paintings, so as to bear with exceeding power on some minds, and specially among those, whose love for the art leads them to a more constant dwelling in thought and memory on those paintings, which embody, as it were, the spirit of the Mediæval religion. Too often Christianity is forsaken, and Mariolatry embraced : God is forgotten and the Madonna is worshipped.

It is an interesting fact as illustrating these views, that very many of the young German students of painting at Rome have fallen into this snare. From admiring and studying these remarkable paintings, they seem to have become enthusiasts in the feeling which they embody ; and by no very difficult transition, having imbibed the spirit that gave birth to the idea, they have become worshippers of the Madonna and the saints, and have entered the church of Rome.

It is observable, that while an admiration for painting has led many to embrace the church of Rome, an admiration for sculpture has never had a similar effect. Many reasons have been assigned for this interesting fact. But that which appears to me to be the real cause is this. All the best and finest illustrations of the art of painting, the chief work of the first masters, have been associated with religion, and have been especially designed in connection with the church of Rome. It was an art essentially dedicated to the church of Rome, and therefore the study of such paintings is replete with associations connected with the religion of that church. With sculpture however it is far otherwise. The finest models in the world, are those statues which have been derived from heathen hands, and which were designed and consecrated to the memory of

heathen demigods, or were the embodiments of some heathen ideal. Therefore all their associations in the mind of the admiring student are connected with scenes and persons and opinions very alien from all that would lead to an admiration of the church of Rome. But whether this be the true explanation of the fact, there can be no doubt that a love of painting has led many a student to receive impressions, and to imbibe principles, or at least feelings, which a love of sculpture has never produced.

It has become the fashion, perhaps the cant, among the artists at Rome, and especially among the ecclesiastics of Rome, to regard sculpture as a heathen art, and to designate painting as essentially—"The Christian Art." As among the heathen, the great object was the production of such statues as might stand upon their altars, represent their God, and excite the worship of the people; and in consequence, the demand for such statues, led to the earnest and enthusiastic cultivation of the art of sculpture; so among the christians—at least the members of the Church of Rome—the grand object was to secure such pictures as might ornament their churches, stand upon their altars, and excite the devotion of the people; and as a consequence, a demand so general for such pictures led to an intense study and enthusiastic cultivation of the art, especially in the department of religious subjects. It is mainly to this we are disposed to ascribe the very general appropriation of the art of painting to such subjects in past times. And as for its revival within the last few years, at Rome and Munich, under the affected name of 'Christian Art,' it is but an attempt to imitate the old artists of 'the religious school,' which existed before the age of the Reformation, and whose ideal of Christianity—whose ideal of

perfection was exploded by the light of the Reformation. That some of the votaries of this 'Christian Art' have produced works of taste, of beauty, of grace and of talent, is very certain, but they all bear the impress of imitation of that which may be regarded as the early style of Raffaele, when he had not yet departed altogether from the peculiarities of his master, Pietro Perugino, who possessed to an intense degree the characteristics of 'the religious school.'

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FROM FLORENCE—CAMPANARI AND MRS. HAMILTON GRAY
—VISIT TO THE ETRUSCAN CITIES—THE SEPULCHRES AT CHUSI—THE
RUINS AND SEPULCHRES OF FALLERI—THE ETRUSCAN MUSEUM IN
THE VATICAN—THE APPROACH TO ROME—THE STATE OF THE CAM-
PAGNA—THE ENTRANCE TO THE CITY—THE APPEARANCE OF THE
STREETS—A DAY'S RAMBLE—THE FORUM OF TRAJAN—THE CAPITOL
—THE ROMAN FORUM—THE COLISEUM—ST. JOHN OF LATERAN—ST.
MARIA MAGGIORE—THE PINCIAN HILL—THE VATICAN.



THE COLISEUM.

THERE are
very few places
that can compete
with Florence in the number and variety of its attractions. And
few indeed are the travellers, who do not enter it with pleasure,
and leave it with regret. It is one of those places which
always leave a pleasant impression on the memory, and a wil-

lingness to visit it again. But it stands as it were on the high road to other scenes of great and absorbing interest, and the traveller feels anxious to press forward. He is seized with that eager and anxious feeling so generally experienced, to penetrate to the end of his course; especially such an end as is usually anticipated by the traveller towards the south. And yet he looks and lingers, and looks and lingers still, amidst the attractions of this delightful city. We were no exception to the rule, and still loved to linger among the galleries of Florence, even though the sepulchres of Etruria and the wonders of Rome were before us.

And here we are bound in all gratitude to make our most sincere acknowledgments, for all the gratification and enjoyment we owe to two persons, whose taste and genius have proved to us a source of inexpressible interest and pleasure. One of these was signor Campanari, whose exhibition of Etruscan tombs, monuments, and ornaments, in London some years since, first awakened an interest and a taste in our minds, for the remains of Etruria. And never shall we forget the perfect delight we experienced, and the dreamy reveries of the shadowy past, that flitted through the imagination, after first seeing the admirable representations of the interiors of some painted sepulchres—the chariots and horses preparing for the race—the young females figuring in the dance—the musicians playing on the double pipes—their reclining figures at their feasts—the peculiar costume of all. Those personal ornaments, too, that are the wreck of an ancient civilization, with the half-Egyptian and half-Grecian character of the faces and the drawings, presented objects of exceeding interest to our minds. The other person to whose taste and research

we feel most deeply indebted, is Mrs. Hamilton Gray, whose interesting details of those scenes, those ruins, those cities, those sepulchres, those ornaments of ancient Etruria, which in the warmth of her zeal she had visited, were calculated to awaken the highest interest in the subject of Etruscan antiquity. That little volume, the production of her accomplished and imaginative mind, lifted the veil that had so long concealed subjects of interest and objects of curiosity, and we were enabled to form some conception of the pleasure to be expected from a visit to the same scenes. The whole region between Florence and Rome, is now and for ever stamped with a new and additional interest.

The course we adopted was this. We resolved to make our journey from Florence to Rome subservient to our desire to see the paintings at Sienna, the cathedral at Orvieto, the grand *Chef d'œuvre* of Pietro Perugino at Citta delle Pieve, the falls of Terni, &c. and also to our object of visiting so many of the sepulchres and ruins of Etruria, as would give us an adequate idea of the whole. We therefore arranged and were enabled to carry out our arrangements in the most satisfactory way, to visit Cortona, so as to see the remains of the Etruscan walls, as well as some of the sepulchres in that neighbourhood—also Volterra, where may be seen, a very little way from the town, the most extraordinary examples of the gigantic architecture of their walls. The stones in many instances are of enormous magnitude, and required a mechanical power for their movement, which implies great knowledge in those days. The ancient gateway still remains, and the many generations of above two thousand years have seen no change in its form or its use, unless in those three stones, which some have *imagined* had once been sculptured as the

heads of lions, or as the faces of men ; for, beyond imagination, there is not the remotest or faintest semblance of anything, but blocks of unshapen stone. At Volterra, also, are some sepulchres, a large collection of tombs or cinerary urns, a vast supply of the kinds of *terra cotta* vessels peculiar to the region, and many other interesting remains. We visited the sepulchres at Perugia, and the remains of Etruscan walls in many places, but we were deeply interested—more than ordinarily—in Chusi and St. Maria de Falleri.

The sepulchres at Chusi are endless in number. Large and extensive tracts seem once to have been vast cemeteries for the population of many centuries. They are now covered with soil, and crops are sown and reaped, as if the foot of man and the trace of civilization had never before been there ; and yet on digging deeply into the soil, all is found excavated and arched and built as closely as a honeycomb, with all the evidence that speaks of the sepulchres of a past and remote people—a people so past and remote, that the faintest thread of tradition as to their existence, cannot be traced among the tribes and families that people the peninsula of Italy. It is truly marvellous how little the page of history has recorded of this ancient people—far more ancient and more civilized than the Romans themselves, who seem to have toiled in the plundering of those sepulchres, and in the destruction of every trace and relic of their predecessors, proving Rome to have been not the friend, but the foe—not the promoter, but the destroyer, of civilization and of art. There, amidst the shadows of the unknown past—there, deep beneath the soil of many centuries, that have witnessed the rise and fall of dynasties and empires, are those sepulchres without number, to

witness to the present age the existence of a people and of a civilization that have lived and died in ages more ancient than the records of history.

Those sepulchres exhibit but little variety. Some seem to have been only excavations in the tufa, some have been solidly built of hewn blocks of stone, admirably fitted together ; some are arched or vaulted, some painted. It is a peculiar feeling which we experience in a sepulchral chamber, of an antiquity of two or three thousand years, where the walls are adorned with the paintings that represent the dresses, the feasts, the dances of this unknown people ; and this feeling assumes a new and a deeper interest when standing in the sepulchres of the kings and chiefs of the by-gone and vanished race ; some of these have been ascertained, and pillars sustain the vaulted roof, and sepulchral chamber after sepulchral chamber opens to view, and in some excavations, whole series of cinerary tombs, or chests of marble or alabaster, sculptured mythological subjects, and funeral processions are seen, till a multitude of new thoughts rush into the imagination, and bear it back to vanished years, so as to exclude the ordinary thoughts that are associated with the dead ; and lead us to moralize in sadness, and to speculate on the prospects of the future. In the sepulchres of Etruria, our thoughts were altogether in the past.

The remains of the city of Falerium or Falleri, are near Civita Castellana. There are portions of the walls of the old Etruscan architecture of the original city, still traceable at Civita Castellana ; and at a distance of three or four miles are the remains of the second city, which was built after the destruction of the first by the Romans. And there they still stand, one of the most extraordinary monu-

ments of past ages ; above two thousand years have gone over this city, and all its dwellings and temples have passed away : but the walls remain, and the long lines of the sepulchres of those ancient people, remain the only witnesses of a past existence.

The walls that surrounded the city, are in a state of preservation truly wonderful ; in many parts their height is perfect as ever, and not an injury traceable on a single block of the tufa ; course after course of those blocks appear as carefully wrought, and as regularly laid as in the finest public edifices in England, the only difference being in their enormous magnitude. In some parts the walls are injured, apparently by the hand of man rather than by the power of time. There are two gate-ways, the arches of which are still perfect, one of them with the head of Jove sculptured on the key-stone ; a series of towers may be traced along the walls, some of them in a wonderful state of preservation ; and the whole pile, here crumbling into ruins, there proudly standing in all its pristine height and power, here embraced and encircled by masses of the thickest and most luxuriant ivy, and there naked and bare as at the first moment of the erection ; the whole pile standing amidst the solitude of the plain, and in the deep shadows of old forest-trees, presents to the eye one of the most interesting spectacles, to recal the memory of ancient Etruria.

But that which if possible still more interested us, was the scene of the sepulchres : the ancient city was built on the bank of a small stream, which from the depth of the bed and the nature of its banks, may well be believed to have been, in ages long ago, a deep and mighty river. The banks are precipitous, and seem chiefly to be vast beds of

tufa; and all along these banks for some miles, was the chosen scene for the sepulchres of this ancient people. These are one continuous series of excavations; there is usually an opening, which gives evidence of having once contained some species of door—of stone or other material: on entering they generally present the appearance of a vault, some of them very small, others very large, but all of sufficient size to contain a number of tombs; some few presented an internal opening into a further or inner vault, but there was no trace of painting or sculpture in any of those we entered; and we could not hear that there were any such. All were exposed for ages to the light and to the winds of heaven, and had been despoiled of their contents many centuries past; there was nothing to conceal them, beyond the trees that flung their shadows over them, and low thick shrubs that crowded luxuriantly around them, and often shaded them from view. There was no living thing to be seen, but the wild goats that browsed about the ruins, and found a shelter among the sepulchres; and a few birds that flitted from the trees to the shrubs, and from the ruins to the sepulchres. All was lonely—very lonely and silent, for the birds chirped no song, and there was no voice but that of the waters among the stones of the brook; it was such a place as one would think fitting for the sepulchres of Etruria, and a scene where few would fail to give way to the thoughts, the reveries, which the ruins of the city of two thousand years ago, and the sepulchres of its ancient people, were calculated to create.

But the wonder of wonders, connected with ancient Etruria, is the evident civilization and knowledge of art which characterized its people. It is of very small impor-

tance to the mere pilgrim of taste and amusement, and still less to the pilgrim of religion, whether this civilization and knowledge of art was indigenous, or imported from Egypt or from Greece. The fact of their existence, in a very high degree, pervading all the heart or central portions of Italy, is undoubted; and that too, at an epoch anterior to the existence of the Roman people. There was a refinement, a luxury, and a real civilization in those regions, which was broken down and destroyed by the rude barbarism of the early Romans. Civilization was there, and then the barbarism of the Romans came in as a flood, and destroyed it for ages; till century after century had gone by, and then the cycle of civilization came round again, and settled in the same region in the towns of the empire. And then again, the barbarism of Goths and Vandals, and the children of the frozen north, overran and wasted its fair fields, till centuries rolled over it; and then again, a third cycle of civilization may be said to have visited it. It would seem as if the past was a succession of waves of barbarism and civilization, alternating, as a deluge of ruin, or as a tide of blessing, over the land; and new tribes, new manners, new languages, seem borne in upon the surface; quietly assuming the places, and forgetting the existence of those that are past.

The truest—almost the only—monuments of Etrurian civilization and art, have been found in the sepulchres of its people. The ‘Museo Gregoriano,’ in the Vatican, contains the most beautiful and exquisite specimen of tazzi, pateræ, vases, as well as of chains and ornaments of gold of the most elaborate and perfect workmanship, that have been found in these sepulchres. We have seen the collections at Volterra, at Florence, at Naples; and most, if not

all, the private collections among the admirers of Etrurian antiquities at Rome ; but nothing can, for a moment, compare with the variety or the beauty of the specimens in the Vatican. No expense has been spared in its collection ; the greatest taste has been exhibited in its selection ; there is much judgment displayed in the arrangement ; and, as a whole, it presents one of the most interesting exhibitions in the world. We visited it again and again, and yet again, studying the beautiful engravings in a large work, I believe, by Marchi : and then again visiting the collection, and never wearying of looking at such exquisite specimens of Etruscan art. But Etruria and Etruscan antiquities, however delightful a subject, are not the objects of our pilgrimage. And the paintings at Sienna, the falls of Terni, the scenery around Orvieto, the cathedral of that city, with its mosaic front, and its frescoes by Beato Angelico and Luca Signorelli, and many other objects of interest, have been described so often and so well, that they may safely be omitted from this account of our pilgrimage to Rome.

The near approach to Rome is singularly uninteresting. The Campagna, or surrounding country, especially on the side by which travellers approach from the north, is open and without trees, without villas, without farms, even without vineyards or oliveyards ; and apparently, almost without inhabitants. It is said that this has arisen from the prevalence of malaria, by which all population is excluded, and all cultivation of the soil prevented. And as an idea prevails very generally, that the vegetation of trees generates malaria, they neither plant the young, nor cherish the old, but cut down everything, till the land has become a wide, level, barren, uncultivated, and unpicturesque

waste. And to add to all this, there is the absence of all and everything one would have anticipated, in approaching the ruins of 'the Eternal City'—the seat and throne of the empire of the world. There are no mouldering remains of ancient villas, there are no ruins clothed in ivy, to give even the least idea of the temples and the shrines of the 'Gods many, and Lords many,' of that old mythology. There are no stately columns standing in their solitude; and scarcely a stone that speaks of the generations that have been born, and lived, and died; whose cradles were rocked, and whose sepulchres were built in this region. Every trace of a past existence,—every memorial of a by-gone race, has vanished; and nothing remains but the record of an imperishable history. All is uninteresting, except as associated with that one idea, which lays hold of us with a grasp of iron upon every feeling—the idea that it is really the approach to the City of Rome.

For mile after mile of this dreary Campagna, the eye is ever on the watch to catch the first glimpse of the Dome of St. Peter's. It towers finely over the city, which, seen in the distance, looks small, unpicturesque, and uninteresting. The first aspect is, undoubtedly, disappointing. There is scarcely a city or village in Italy, that cannot boast of a more picturesque and interesting site than the City of Rome: though a better position for a capital can scarcely be imagined, with that wide plain stretching away in all directions; and which, if cultivated, as it was in the times of the old Romans, would support a population of any amount. But when the traveller has once passed this wide Campagna, has crossed the Tiber, come in view of the gates, has entered the Piazza del Popolo, and looked

around him, he will be constrained to confess, that the entrance is worthy of any city in the world.

But from that moment and that spot the charm is broken ; the streets are narrow and irregular, the houses un-architectural and desolate, the shops poor and ill-supplied, the streets, except the Corso, without any trottoir ; and all the houses in need of whitewash, and all the streets in need of cleansing ; every species of filth and every kind of odour, greet the visitant on his entrance among the streets of this city of the church. And although the hotels are admirable, the best of them being under the management of foreigners ; and although the apartments prepared for the accommodation of strangers during their winter sojourn, are very numerous, yet it is an universal feeling, that were it not for the many objects of interest with which Rome abounds, and were it not for the society afforded by the numbers of visitors, it would be as undesirable a residence as any in the world. For filth, for odours, for indecency, for all that is offensive to the eye, to the feelings, to the habits of a cleanly and an orderly people, the city of Rome surpasses almost any city in the world. If the parish of St. Giles in London were isolated, and by some strange revolution were located in the centre of Salisbury plain, it would present a more cleanly and comfortable and respectable appearance than the city of Rome.

In a few days our apartments were taken, our arrangements made, and we were settled as suitably as we could expect.

One of the most interesting rambles for the stranger, in taking his first view of this scene of wonders, is that which, commencing at the Piazza del Popolo, or at the Piazza de Spagna, leads him along the Corso. He will there see the

best streets in the city, and the best dressed of the population. After traversing this, a turn to the left will lead to the Forum of Trajan; there stands the noble column of Trajan with its sculptured triumphs, but with the absurd anomaly of the statue of Trajan being displaced by that of St. Peter; and there too have been excavated the lower portions of many ancient pillar, to recal the memories of the mighty dead, whose statues adorned them, or who had walked among them. A little further by a short way to the right is the approach to the Capitol. It may be ascended by the 124 steps of white marble, said to have once conducted to the temple of Venus, and now leading to the church of the Virgin Mary of Ara Cœli; or it may be ascended by the sloping way or stairs, which are crowned with the horses and figures of Castor and Pollux. There too stands the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, and around it the three edifices of the Capitol, in one of which may at times be seen the scarcely visible shadow of the Roman senate, dragging out a wretched existence amidst a multitude of formalities; and in the other are some few of the rarest gems of antiquity of which Rome can boast the possession, and where for many a day the man of taste and of learning will find ample occupation and delight. Ascending the tower of the Capitol, the eye may range over all the seven hills, and mark the spots famed for transactions on which the destinies of the world were suspended; and then as he descends into the old Roman Forum, he finds himself on that spot, which, whether viewed in connection with the varied associations of the wondrous past, or with those exquisite groups of columns, the ruins of ancient temples that adorn it, must ever hold a very prominent place of interest in the mind. There, on one

side, may be traced the Tarpeian rock ; there, on the other side, are the Mamertine prisons, the creation of Etruscan times, at least of the times of the old kings of infant Rome ; and possessing a sacred interest as the prison of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. There, on one hand, are the remains of the temple of Romulus ; and there too the supposed relics of the temple of Remus ; here is the arch of Severus, and the Via Sacra winding its way among the temples, passing through this arch, and traversing the whole length of the Forum, by the Basilica of Constantine, to the arch of Titus, with its sculpture of the ark and the golden candlestick, proclaiming the captivity and dispersion of the ancient people of Jehovah. It is altogether a scene so full of interest, so replete with objects, each in itself enough to supply imagination with ample material for a noble epic, so crowded with the memorials of the mighty dead, and of the wondrous past, that no mind can fully embrace it. All is bewilderment, excess of beauties, repletion of wonders, crowding of memories, that fill and absorb the mind, and render it absolutely necessary to recur, again and again, and yet again, devoting the mind, day after day, to the thoughts that are suggested by each separate object, and which are more than enough for the narrow limits of the mind to take in. Imagination may wing its way through the remotest past, and command the range of thousands of years ; but no imagination can grasp the multitude of objects of high and thrilling interest, that crowd the vicinity of the Roman Forum, unless they are taken in the slow and gradual succession of many days.

And then, passing beneath the arch of Titus, with the mind full of those high and solemn reflections, which are

suggested by its sculpture of the conquests of Jerusalem, and the destinies of that ancient nation, the eye falls upon a new and wondrous scene of ruins. On one hand are the ruins of the palace of the Cæsars—the home and resting-place of the kings of the world ; and one may well pause and think of the scenes of pomp, of luxury, and every species of crime, that were witnessed in those now desolate halls. They were then the home of the conquerors of the world, and they are now one wide mass of ruin and desolation. On the other hand may be seen the remains of the temple of Venus, now converted into a convent of monks, whose garden-wall is in part composed of these remains. And then, right before the eye, is that noblest pile of all—the Coliseum. Notwithstanding the wasting process of centuries of decay—notwithstanding the rude and rough vandalism of the northern conquerors—notwithstanding the yet worse barbarism of the Roman nobles of later times, in abstracting the stones from it, as from a quarry, to build their palaces, and notwithstanding the long and unpardonable neglect of the popes, the priests, and monks of Rome—the Coliseum still remains the noblest and most magnificent pile of ruins in that city of ruins. Whether the pilgrim ranges around it, or traverses its broad arena, or ascends its long flights of steps, or circles around its highest ranges, or examines its massive and noble architecture, it presents to the mind, what must be felt to be one of the greatest wonders of the world. And then as he stands and looks down into the arena, and thinks of the scenes so often transacted there ;—as he thinks of those gladiatorial fights where the bloodiest butcheries of man by the hands of man, and for the amusement of man, were constantly perpetrated—as he thinks of those sad and

fearful times when men, who held the same faith and hope with ourselves, were exposed, for no other crime than love for the Saviour, to the claws of tigers, and the teeth of lions, and there with heroism and fidelity meekly surrendered their lives, and proved themselves the truest and the noblest of heroes; as the pilgrim stands above and looks down upon the theatre of such scenes, the darkest tragedies the world has ever gazed on—as he looks down from the crumbling heights, and the grass-grown ruins, he will marvel that a people could exist to take pleasure in such scenes; and he will bless God for having removed the sceptre and broken the power, and scattered the magnificence, of that concentration of brutal tyranny, and of savage cruelty—the empire of Rome.

Leaving the ruins of the Coliseum, the pilgrim passes onwards to the Lateran. On his way he may enter the Church of St. Clement. It is beyond all question the most interesting of all the Churches of Rome, to the mind of all who desire to study the architecture or arrangements of the churches of ancient Christianity. It retains the form of the ancient churches, more perfectly than any other of the churches at Rome, still presenting the form and arrangements of the old basilica in all its peculiarities. From this he passes on to the palace and church of St. John of Lateran. It forms a strange contrast with the temples, the palaces, the Coliseum, and other ruins of ancient Rome. Its front is firm, massive, imposing, and derives much of its effect from its noble situation. Its interior creates a powerful impression when seen for the first time, but the impression fades and becomes less and less at every subsequent examination. It has a noble tribune, extending through the whole transept, and consider-

ably elevated above the body or nave of the Church, together with five aisles, presenting a very imposing appearance, from the solidity, grandeur and vastness of the edifice as a whole. It is the senior Basilica, the elder Church of all the Churches of Rome, having precedence even of St. Peter's, as having been the oldest as to its foundation. Adjoining is a fine Baptistery, and near it is the *Santa Scala* or Holy Stairs, said to have been the veritable staircase of the Palace of Pontius Pilate, which had been marked with the blood of the suffering Messiah, and which was held so sacred, that an indulgence of nine years is awarded by the Church, for every step of its ascent which is traversed by the pious devotee on his knees !

On leaving the Lateran, the pilgrim will see the Basilica of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, one of the privileged or High Basilicas of Rome, and famous for its prodigious treasury of relics, and its special privilege of releasing souls from purgatory on an appointed day. Near it are the remains of an amphitheatre, and from this the pilgrim may pass in a direct line to the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, the third in point of precedence of all the Basilicas, and in some respects the most beautiful of all. Its lines of beautiful columns, the spoils of Heathen Temples, are singularly pleasing to the eye, though bad taste and disregard for true antiquity has broken the once perfect line, in order to give the appearance of a transept. Still however its exquisitely-worked and decorated roof—its noble tribune and choir—its rich marble chapels—its magnificent columns, rank it as equal in beauty and magnificence to any Church in the city of Rome ; almost a rival in some particulars to St. Peter's itself. Near it is the Church of S. Prassede, remarkable for its sacred relics ; and also the

Church of St. Antony, so celebrated for its yearly festival of the baptism of animals of every kind.

The pilgrim, on leaving this, passes along the Quirinal Hill, so associated in all the history of the past, and so on by the Quattro Fontane to the Pincian Hill, which is the resort of the fashionables of Rome when taking their carriage-airing. And after looking from the balustrade and terrace over the Campus Martius to the "Yellow Tiber" and the Palace of the Vatican, and the noble dome of St. Peter's, he descends into the Piazza del Popolo or into the Piazza del Spagna, from which his ramble had commenced, after traversing with facility the most interesting scenes of Rome.

One of the greatest points of attraction is naturally St. Peter's and the Vatican. In connection with the former of these, are all the associations of the past and present religion of Rome—all connected with the history of primitive Christianity—of the middle ages, and the singular means by which funds were raised for the erecting of the present magnificent Church, and all the associations of the high ceremonies of the Church of Rome, as performed in the presence, and with the assistance of the supreme Pontiff, the "Vicar of Jesus Christ and Head of the Church on earth:" and together with these, all that is connected with its noble architecture, its fine proportions, its exquisite marbles, its glorious dome, constituting it the most splendid and magnificent Temple in the world. In connection with the latter are the remains of Christian antiquity, the remains of Heathen antiquity, the most exquisite specimens of sculpture that the imagination can conceive, the most precious specimens of the pencils of Raffaele, Michael Angelo and others, so precious that a

kingdom could not purchase them; a library the most rare and rich in the universe, and a collection of antiquities, books, vases, gems, sculpture and painting that immeasurably surpasses all anticipation; constituting the Palace of the Vatican an object that might well repay a pilgrimage from the remotest borders of Europe.

The walk from the Capitol to the Coliseum, among the fallen columns and crumbling arches of the temples and palaces of Heathen Rome, has no rival, unless in a walk through the galleries, saloons, library, and chapels of the Palace of the Vatican, and in St. Peter's, the present pride and glory of Christian Rome.

But these are not the object of my Pilgrimage. Many and oft were the occasions when they allured us to give our days and weeks to the enjoyment which they imparted to us; so that if by studying them and gazing on them with unmixed admiration, and surrendering the mind and imagination to the memories of the past, we could imbibe any of the inspiration that called them into existence, we had been indeed inspired. But the essential object of this Pilgrimage was religion, and the main subject of these papers must be religion. Those who seek information on the antiquities of Rome, its Temples, Palaces, and Theatres, will find ample assistance in many able and learned works, and I cannot add one item to the amount of such information; but, as the state of Religion is less known, as there is far too little understood in England respecting the actual, the real state of religion at Rome; of the Monastic institutions—of the high ceremonies—of the holy relics—of the manner of worship in this city of the Church,—I shall devote myself exclusively to the exhibition of the

Religion of the Church—to the description of the state of
ROMANISM AT ROME.



ARCH OF TITUS.

CHAPTER V.

THE MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

THE GREAT NUMBER OF THESE ESTABLISHMENTS—THEIR NATURE MISUNDERSTOOD—THOSE APPROPRIATED TO THE WEALTHIER CLASSES, THE CREATIONS OF CONVENIENCE RATHER THAN OF RELIGION—SIMILARITY TO THE COLLEGIATE LIFE OF ENGLAND—MORAL CHARACTER OF THE INMATES—THE CONVENTS OF THE MENDICANT AND LOWER ORDERS—SIMILARITY TO OVER-GROWN ALMS-HOUSES—MEANS OF SUPPORT—PROPOSED REESTABLISHMENT IN ENGLAND—WHETHER CALCULATED TO RELIEVE THE DESTITUTION OF THE POOR.

NUNNERIES INVARIABLY CALLED MONASTERIES—CREATED BY THE SOCIAL STATE OF ITALY—THE STATEMENTS OF THEIR PREACHERS—MOTIVES THAT LEAD TO THEIR SUPPORT—THE INTENTIONS OF PARENTS—NUNNERIES AS A PROTECTION FROM THE EVILS OF THE WORLD—AS A PROVISION FOR DAUGHTERS—NOMINALLY FREE BUT REALLY RESTRAINED—STATE OF FEELING AMONG THE INMATES—DEATHS FROM SORROW AND MADNESS—THEIR MODE OF LIFE—MORAL CHARACTER OF SUCH ESTABLISHMENTS.

CHAPTER V.

THE MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

It is impossible to traverse Italy, without the mind often recurring, and that again and again, to the system of Monastic Institutions. They are so unlike anything in our own, our Protestant country, so alien from the spirit of all our institutions, whether civil or religious or charitable, so associated in our minds with the ignorance and superstition of past ages, and yet so constantly pressed upon the attention in Italy, especially upon the attention of any whose pilgrimage is a pilgrimage of religion, that it is impossible to escape from an examination of so important an element in the religious life of Italy.

There is no subject, whether connected with the political condition, or the religious state, or the picturesque aspect of the country, that presents itself so often to the mind of a stranger, as this Monastic or Conventual system. In the lonely valley—on the rugged mountain—by the shores of the lake—in the depths of the forest—in the rustic village—in the thronging city; everywhere convents and monasteries are presented to view, so as to form a

special feature in the character of the scenery of Italy. There is scarcely a large mansion or extensive building, more extensive than ordinary, to be seen in some striking situation, and attracting the eye of the traveller, as he passes through the country, but the chances are that it is some convent, or some monastery. The multitude of monks and friars exceeds all anticipations. They are seen on the public roads, and on the fashionable promenades, in the palace of the noble, and in the hovel of the peasant ; in the services of the churches, and at the amusements of the people. In all and every kind of place, they are recognizable by their dresses of brown, and of white, and of black ; and of brown and white : and of white and black, according to the peculiar costume of the several orders.

There are few subjects so little understood in England, as the nature of the monastic or conventual systems. Even among persons who have travelled much, among persons who have been studying ecclesiastic lore ; and among the well-read, and otherwise well-informed clergy of the Church of England, there are the greatest mistakes and misapprehensions as to the real nature of the system. For myself I must make full and frank confession, of my own most erroneous and most mistaken views respecting it, until by actual and personal inspection, and by enquiries and observation made within the walls of the establishments, I was enabled to correct the opinions formerly entertained. A few words here therefore will be useful before describing what fell under my notice.

It has been very generally imagined, and by none more than by myself, that these monastic institutions were a home and a refuge for holy and pious priests, who wished to separate themselves from all parochial duties and secu-

lar occupations, that they might give themselves uninterruptedly to the study of theology, or to the exercise of private devotion, or to undergo some bodily inflictions in the retirement of the cloister. It has been often imagined also that in these institutions, there was a place and a shelter, where, as in some quiet and lonely cell, religious laymen might hide themselves from the evils and temptations of the world, and from the cares and distractions of a family ;—there, as lay-brothers of the order, possessing leisure for private devotion, and enjoying the spiritual advantages of the ordained members. In short, it has been imagined, that these monastic institutions are designed purely for holy and religious purposes. This is decidedly a mistake, so far at least as the present convents and monasteries of Italy are concerned. All these notions seem to have arisen from our historical knowledge of what monastic institutions were in the middle or dark ages, or at least of what we have imagined them to have been ; and the story of many a monarch and warrior seeking peace within the walls of a monastery, when wearied of the world, or saddened by disappointed hope, has tended much to draw a veil of romantic interest over the monastic life : and has led to many of our misconceptions as to the real nature of these institutions, as they exist at the present day.

There are two classes of monasteries ; of which it will be necessary to speak separately.

One of these is destined for the higher classes of society. Throughout the papal states, and generally throughout Italy until of late years, it was not usual for the younger sons of the higher classes to marry. There being only two classes in society, nobles and plebians, the professions and mercantile pursuits were held beneath the former and

left altogether to the latter. There was no middle class, and the supposed necessity of maintaining the wealth and territorial position of the head of every noble house, prevented the making suitable provisions for younger sons, or giving adequate portions to the daughters. This tended naturally to advance the convents and monasteries, in which those younger sons and daughters could easily be disposed of, without the necessity of a large provision ; as, being destined in those institutions to remain unmarried, there could be no need of looking beyond their personal necessities. Thus it came to be a general rule, that the usual provision for a younger son was the church. It is not however in the same sense, as that expression is used in England, where it implies ordination, and ministerial charge and parochial duties. It merely implies the becoming a member of some monastery, without any duties or responsibilities being necessarily involved in it.

Some of these convents are well and richly endowed ; and as they are conducted with great respectability, are supplied with many comforts, and impose no rigid discipline, they admit only a superior class of persons as members, with the exception of a few laymen of the lower classes, who are admitted on the express understanding of their being servants to the others ; acting as porters, cooks, messengers, &c. In convents of this class, the mode of life is not unlike that of some members of our English universities. Having nothing to do, they live in their apartments, dine together, gossip with one another, attend the prescribed number of services at chapel ; sometimes, where their taste so inclines, they give themselves to study, and thus spend, what some regard as a pleasant batchelor's life. This is precisely the character of the

more respectable convents of Rome ; religion and religious feeling have as little to do with the matter as with a college life in England.

It is not religion, but convenience, that has dictated the system. And the whole interior life of a convent, of the superior class, bears all the traces of this. Some of them offer a considerable amount of comfort to their members, with pleasant gardens, a good library, and an excellent table, with well-furnished apartments. In one establishment,—through the whole of which I was kindly conducted by one of its members,—there was appropriated to each, a suite of small apartments, consisting of a sitting-room, a sleeping-room, and a little study, all opening into another vacant apartment, or hall, or gallery ; and the whole being separated by a door from all the rest of the establishment. There were twenty-two gentlemen living in this convent, every one of them possessing a similar suite of apartments. And though to the eye of one accustomed to the comforts of an English house, there always seemed a lack of comfort about these establishments ; yet such is the general character of an Italian house. And, I am bound in candor and honesty to say, that the bachelor life of a convent in Italy, is in every respect, considering the two countries, equal in comforts and in society and enjoyment to the general run of a college life in England. In some respects, it has a decided advantage.

Into some of these convents of the superior class, it is difficult to obtain admission as members or brothers. They are well and richly endowed, and some require considerable interest—some require family connection, as the appointments rest with certain families,—like the Founder's kin in our universities ;—some require a considerable sum of

money, as five hundred pounds, and then the member is provided for life with his home, his support, and his clothing. Some contain very few, some very many brothers ; and there are no duties, no responsibilities, and no employment or restraints, farther than attending the prescribed number of chapels, and always wearing the prescribed dress, according to the very similar rules of our universities. A convent-life in Italy is only another phase of a college life in England, but with less restraints, and less responsibilities.

It is a great mistake, into which multitudes fall, to suppose that these monks are priests. In some of the smaller convents, a majority of them will perhaps be ordained men ; but, generally, in the larger ones, there are only so many of them ordained to the priesthood as will be sufficient to discharge the clerical duties required by the establishment. The rest are laymen, who have merely received the tonsure, or who have been ordained to the privilege of holding the candles, or to some similar office in the church ; so that, looking on the whole body of the monks and friars of Rome, there are probably not one tenth of the number who are ordained priests of the church. And though they are generally required to take the three vows ; of chastity, by which they bind themselves never to marry—of poverty, by which they bind themselves to bestow all their property on the convent—of obedience, by which they bind themselves to obey the superior, yet it may well be believed that with so very large a proportion of the brothers and members being laymen, they do not feel themselves under such strict moral restraint as would be desirable for public example. And the freedom with which they can leave their convents, ramble through

the country, lounge through the streets, frequent the coffee-houses, and visit the drawing-rooms of their female acquaintances, gives them the opportunity of enjoying life, and unhappily also of bringing occasionally much scandal upon religion.

I do not feel disposed to attribute to the monks and friars of Rome any special irregularity or impropriety of life. Every one knows, who has any knowledge of the world, that when a number of unmarried men are living together in a barrack, or residing together in a college, the atmosphere of such places is not usually more pure and moral than elsewhere. The experience of the world has long since settled this matter. Now, the convents of the higher classes in Italy, are neither more nor less than large boarding-houses for the younger sons of the aristocracy,—a sort of club, arranged in an Italian fashion, where they can live cheaply and well, and enjoy the society of those who are in every respect their equals, within the establishment, and at all times go forth to enjoy any society more suited to their tastes, without the establishment. And, under a system like this, it is contrary to all experience of mankind, and all knowledge of the world, to suppose that in such large assemblages of young and unmarried men, there should not be a certain amount of irregularity and impropriety. The climate and society of Italy have never been remarkable for purity of morals.

The results are what might be anticipated. Some, whose inclinations lead them to study, devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge in the various departments of literature, and have proved themselves among the most intellectual, learned, and able men of the age, while they are the most polished and agreeable companions. Some,

whose tendencies are towards religion, or whose ambition is to rise in the state, devote themselves to the acquisition of ecclesiastical knowledge, and political intrigue, which fill, at Rome, the place of parliamentary talent to the ambitious aspirant in England ; the only channel to power at Rome being through the church. Others, whose indolence or whose recklessness make them indifferent to such things, devote themselves to the amusement of the passing hour. And accordingly they are seen in the drawing-room, and in the billiard-room, and at the gaming-table ; and in every place of fashion or amusement. Truly, they are sometimes where they ought not to be ;—realising the old song, —‘up-stairs and down-stairs, *and in my lady’s chamber.*’

All this however refers only to those convents which belong to the higher classes of society in Italy. There are others, which are exclusively appropriated to the inferior orders of life. These are chiefly Franciscans and Capuchins, whose appearance is familiar to every one who has visited any part of Italy. Their coarse brown dresses, their shaven crowns, their wooden-sandaled feet, their cord, their rosary, the shaven face of one order, and long beards of the other, are familiar to every eye ; while the filth of their persons and the odour of their clothes are no less familiar to every traveller.

I was conducted through one of the convents of these men, and took particular pains to inform myself as to the nature of the establishment. It contained at the time no less than *one hundred and seventy monks* ! It was necessarily a most extensive building, arranged very much like a barrack for troops, but with this difference, that every monk had a room to himself. But the room was very small. It contained a bed, which was laid or spread on

the floor, a little round table, a chair and a stool, with a window at one end and a door at the other, opening on the gallery, or passage. The dirt and stench of these little rooms, equalled only by a squalid garret in St. Giles' in London, exceeds any possible description, and was only rivalled by the disgusting and loathsome dirt and stench of the monks who inhabited them. The galleries or passages were clean and airy, but each monk had a key for his own apartment, and was allowed to keep it as was most to his own taste. There was a large and handsome chapel below for the monks to use in daily worship. There was a small room above, arranged as a chapel for those who were aged or sick. There was also an excellent dispensary where the sickly monks were lodged, and their health attended to ; so that the whole establishment seemed to me to be a sort of over-grown almshouse ; with much to commend, though with some sad and terrible drawbacks.

I found on enquiry, that almost all these hundred and seventy monks were laymen, and that there were not half-a-dozen ordained priests in the whole establishment. I found also that it required no money to secure admission, as the establishment was so miserably endowed, and its members so wretchedly poor, that no person with five pounds in the world would enter it. But all those persons or classes of persons, who ought to be domestic servants, but were unwilling to work, or who ought to handle a spade or a pitchfork as agricultural labourers, but preferred a life of laziness and idleness to one of labour and industry, —a matter of rather general occurrence in Italy,—could obtain room in this and similar convents, and secure a wretched subsistence, by wearing the dress of the order, and taking the usual vows. These lazy, idle, dirty fellows

were of every age. The great majority of them varied from 25 to 40 years of age. And all without exception seemed of the class of the lowest labouring population; many of these monks being unable to read or write; so that, though the establishment might in theory be regarded by some minds as a holy and christian home and retreat for pious and devoted men from the lower classes of society, yet in actual practice it was a sort of overgrown almshouse, a sort of union poor-house, the inmates of which were not the sick and the infirm and the aged, as in England; but the strong, the active, the healthy, and the able-bodied of the population, who ought to have been compelled to labour for their support. And as for this and the other similar establishments of Franciscans and Capuchins, as houses for the pious and the holy, it needs not that any man should be informed that the inmates are often the most vicious and depraved even in Italy.

Some of them, however, are industrious in their way. The endowments of these convents are often not adequate to the wants of the inmates; accordingly in some that are established in the country there is often a farm attached, and the monks employ themselves in tilling the ground and cultivating the gardens. But at Rome and in the cities they enjoy no such advantage. And as hunger is the parent of ingenious invention, it has often sharpened the wit and subtlety and ingenuity of the monks; many of whom go forth from their cells every day, and exert all their inventive faculties to enable themselves and their brethren to live "by their ways and means." The principal of these is connected with a belief in purgatory. It is believed throughout Italy that there is a purgatory after death, in which the souls of Christians undergo certain

torments for their sins, as a purifying preparation for heaven. It is also taught and believed that a number of "daily masses," of "high masses," of "remembrance masses," of "voluntary offerings," can release those suffering souls, or diminish the intensity of their sufferings in that frightful abode, and thus tend to translate them to a state of rest in the regions of the blessed. The monks and friars of these inferior and mendicant orders avail themselves of this belief, and profess a readiness to offer in the Church of the convent the requisite number of masses, provided a commensurate donation or gratuity be given to the convent for the maintenance of the poor brethren. I have myself witnessed the bargain and arrangement for this, and have seen the masses purchased, the money paid and received, at the moderate charge of about two shillings to secure the release of a soul. The Monks and Friars thus receive the ready money in this world, and then give their pledges, to be honoured in the world to come. I am sure that though purgatory may be an unpleasant prospect to the dying laity, it is exceedingly pleasant and lucrative to the convents; which manage to draw from it the most ample revenues.*

These remarks are designed to apply to the class of inferior convents. The conventual system at large presents a gradation of establishments, from the highest, most comfortable and expensive, to the lowest, most wretched and

* A conversation is related to have taken place between the rector of a parish in Ireland, and the priest,—the two happening to be on friendly terms. The rector complained of the perplexity he was in, from the difficulty of getting in his tithes. "I'll tell you what it is," said the priest, "you must be after taking a lease from me, of about fifteen acres of purgatory, and you'll find it the best farm that ever you farmed."

cheap. Some are strictly exclusive, admitting only members of the nobility; others are arranged so as to suit the means of all classes of persons. The hotels and boarding-houses of London and Paris do not present a more perfect system of gradation than the convents and monasteries of Italy. And while the ample endowments and funds of one class secure all the desirable comforts for the members, the small endowments and poverty of the others expose the members to the temptation of "making merchandise of men's souls," by the execrable traffic in masses for the relief of the souls in purgatory.

A living French tourist has happily expressed himself in reference to these establishments, when describing the state of the monks whom he visited in the East.

"These Monks, poor and useful and living by the labour of their hands, are, properly speaking, only pious labourers; and they ask of the government and of the people, nothing more than the corner of rocky ground which they cultivate with solitude and contemplation. They perfectly illustrate to this day, by their actual existence in the midst of Mahomedan countries, the origin of those first asylums of Christianity in its infancy, its sufferings and its persecutions. *There* was the reason for their existence, and there it still exists for the Maronites. Thus they remain there, what they ought to be every where, but what they never can be, unless by exception, anywhere. If indeed, the present state of society and of religion is suited to monastic institutions, it must not be to those that have been established in another age and with other wants and requirements. Each age ought to have its own social and religious creations. The requirements of the present age are different from the requirements of primitive ages.

“The Monastic Institutions of modern times find only two things which they are able to accomplish better than governments, or individual exertions. These are—Schools and Hospitals. These two are the only spheres which remain for them to occupy in the movement of the actual or present world. But in order to their occupying the former sphere, they must themselves first be partakers of the light which they are to disseminate ;—it is necessary that they be better educated and more truly moral than the population which they propose to instruct and improve.”

Such is the language of Lamartine, and it is truly applicable to the whole monastic system. Whatever were the circumstances that led to its establishment in Italy, it is certain that the great majority of the monastic institutions in that country, at the present day, are the results of family convenience, as supplying an easy way of providing for younger children, where it is difficult to settle a younger son or endow a daughter on her marriage ; and they are in no degree supported by religious feeling, but solely by family convenience. And accordingly, although the members might be usefully for themselves and others employed in schools and hospitals, yet as the mode of life was adopted for convenience, and not for religion, so it is spent according to convenience and not according to religion. It is not more than *one* monastic establishment in *one hundred*, whether of monks or nuns, in Italy, that takes the least part in the conduct of schools or in the management of hospitals. As to the mendicant orders, Capuchin, Franciscan, &c., they are generally the lowest of the people, preferring a life of religious indolence to a life of honest industry ; and many of the inmates, so far from being able to instruct others, are unable to read themselves !

It is imagined by some persons in England, admirers of the mediæval system, that the conventual or monastic institutions were great promoters of charity and almsgiving. They have suggested that their re-establishment in England would be for the advantage of the poor, as they would collect around them large numbers of the destitute ; and daily, as of old, mete out to each his portion of soup or other food. They think that this leaving the poor and destitute dependent upon the voluntary charities of such institutions, would be preferable to the system which entitles them to relief from the soil where they live, under a well-regulated poor-law. In order to strengthen this opinion, it is argued in a tone of triumph, that before the confiscation of the monasteries in the time of Henry VIII, there was no poor-law ; and that the necessity for a poor-law first arose in the time of Elizabeth, as a consequence of the suppression of these institutions,—the poor formerly relieved at these monasteries now requiring a poor-law in their stead.

But this is a consideration that seems to “cut both ways.” At least it has been often remarked, and that too with much apparent justice, that the absence of an effective and right-principled poor-law before the Reformation, was a strong fact illustrating how little the real poor of the land were cared for or considered in those days ;—that the charities of the wealthy were diverted into other channels ; that they were bestowed upon the monks, who first took care of themselves, and then bestowed their leavings upon the poor. And that it was not till the spread of religious light and knowledge, and the emancipation of mind at the Reformation, that right views and generous feelings were developed, and produced their result in establishing the

principle that the poor and destitute of England have a right to support and sustenance from the soil of England. An established church is a national act of religion. A poor-law is a national act of charity. And while the former was adopted both before and after the Reformation, the latter has been the fruit of the charitable sympathies implanted and expanded by the Reformed Faith.

But waving all this, the question still remains, whether the existence of these monastic institutions would prove of any real advantage to the poor and destitute.

The experiment as exhibited in Italy, goes to give a negative, and that a very decided one, to the theory. It is found universally throughout Italy, that monastic institutions do not alleviate the poverty and destitution of the people. There may be, and occasionally there are, a few old women who are always hanging about the gates of those establishments : and they sometimes get some small relief or some little alms from persons passing to and from the establishment. In this respect, a unit from among the population is partially relieved ; but, beyond this, there is no farther usefulness in this particular. Indeed, so far from their being generally palliative of mendicancy, it will be found, that not unfrequently those towns of Italy, which are most signalised by the number and wealth of their monasteries and convents, are in the very same degree remarkable for the poverty and destitution of the population. In the city of Rome, where the number of these institutions exceeds all bounds, and where the monks or friars constitute a very large proportion of the population, it is found necessary to raise subscriptions among the laity, for the purpose of relieving the poor and destitute.

So far as I have been able to form an opinion on this

point, I am decidedly against those institutions; and, I think it a fatal objection to them, that they check and impede the natural current of the charities or alms of the wealthy. Their number is so great—their demands so numerous—their objections so varied—that they intercept the flow of charity; so that that which would naturally pass to the poor and destitute, passes into the hands of the monks and friars. They speak of their destitute convents—of their poor brothers—of the efficacy of their masses for the souls in purgatory—of their prayers daily offered for their benefactors; and in this way they draw into the convents of the mendicant orders almost all those small donations which would otherwise have passed to the poor and destitute of the population. They are a sort of licenced mendicants, investing beggary and mendicancy with an ecclesiastical character; not only drawing to themselves all the alms of the wealthy, but taking away all the shame of beggary so observable in other countries. And thus the money, which, under other circumstances, would be given for the relief of the sick and needy, and for the support of the widow and the orphan, are intercepted by the monasteries and appropriated to their support, under the plea of being some return for the prayers and the masses in which they are occupied for the spiritual advantages of others. In Italy no one ever pretends to justify the existence of such establishments, on the ground of their proving beneficial to the *temporal* interests, or assistant to the *temporal* wants, of the people. The idea of such an use of monasteries and convents never enters into the mind of an Italian.

But after all, what is there to prevent the re-establishment of monastic institutions in England? If a few gentle-

men of Oxford are disposed to make over their estates for the establishment of such institutions, there is nothing in the laws to prevent them. If they wish to draw from the bosom of their family-circle, and to live together in one large house, wearing a particular dress, and attending daily services at chapel, and appropriating their estates to the relief of the poor ; there is nothing to hinder them. If their judgments so approve, and their tastes so incline them, they are at perfect liberty to pursue the one and to act on the other ; but they are under no necessity of demanding powers to do that which is already in the power of every man.

The subject of monasteries, as nunneries are called in Italy, is beset with considerable difficulties. The principle on which they are based—the object which is contemplated in their establishment, and their adequacy to that or to any other useful end, have all been called into question ; I feel, however, that a practical view of this subject will be the most useful. It is certainly that which fell more under our means of observation and opportunity of information. The conclusion at which we have arrived, after all the information we could obtain, is this :—that however unmixed the evils of such a system may seem—however inexcusable and unredeemable in France or England, in Germany or Switzerland, the establishment of monasteries in Italy bears a far different complexion ; not indeed from anything in the nature or conduct of such establishments themselves, but from the state of society in Italy.

The social state of that beautiful land is as sad and melancholy, as its skies are bright and joyous. In the addresses of the preachers at the several receptions of

novices and nuns, at which we were present, there was one pervading idea—one too, not lightly put forth or incidentally alluded to, but running through the whole discourse, and forming the main substratum of everything else. I allude to the idea, that it was very difficult for a young female to preserve herself pure and holy from the sin and vice of the world, except within the walls of a monastery. These preachers had never witnessed the social system of England, or other lands; they had seen only that which pervaded Italy, and especially that of Rome. They were unmarried men, who knew nothing of the purity, the modesty, the virtue, that belongs to a high-toned state of female society. They had seen only the remains of the loose, wanton, and licentious spirit that breathed through every part of Italy during the last century; and knowing this perhaps from books more than from experience, they gave strong and full expression to their belief, that female purity could scarcely be preserved intact, or at least was exposed to great danger, unless within the walls of a monastery. And every one who has had means of observation or information, seems to feel that the judgment of these men, though overstrained as applied universally, is too correct in the main, as applied to the tone of society in Italy, and especially in Rome.

It would be unbecoming in me, who could possess so little opportunity for a sound and just judgment, to express any very decided opinion on the state and tone of private life among the Romans; but I was much struck with this idea, when put forth so strongly as expressing the convictions of those men; and it soon appeared to be a very general feeling among the laity as well as among the clergy. And I was surprised at finding that, even among the women,

who had themselves borne the most respectable and irreproachable characters, there was a strong conviction, that however objectionable the life of the cloister, it yet was the safest life for a female. I had some conversation with both priests and laics on the subject. My wife had much communicated to her by ladies, who were mothers of families, and were conversant with the difficulties that surrounded them. And the general impression was, that the state of society was so ill-arranged—that the tone of feeling was so loose—that moral principle was so lightly valued—that regard for female purity was so little cherished—and the whole framework of the social system so loosened and disjointed, that there was neither a due respect for female character, nor sufficient protection for female purity. Living under governments essentially despotic—living under laws that are framed only to screen the authorities—living in lands where justice can be bought and sold like any other marketable commodity—living among a people ever ripe for any and every revolution—living in this state, they live suspicious of each other; and being without commerce, without education, without employment, they too often make vice and intrigue, and at all events pleasure,—the business, and education, and employment of life. In such a state of things among the men, woman becomes regarded by them, merely as a means to an end, merely as a means to minister to the pleasures of the hour, till too often she sinks into that state in which character is an incumbrance, and modesty is unknown.

This is a dark picture, though a faithful one, of Italian society. It was drawn for us by Italian hands, in the freedom and frankness of private intercourse: and strongly illustrated the grounds of their great predilection for mon-

asteries. It is felt that, in a state of society so distracted and ill-toned, the best and safest place is the retirement and seclusion of the monastery. If the temptations and difficulties of the young female, whether before marriage or after marriage, are so great, then it ceases to be a matter of astonishment that these monasteries should be so numerous in Italy; and this is too true, as well as too transparent, to escape the notice of any one. A young Italian lady, before her marriage, is not permitted to stir out of the sight of her mother; and no acquaintance with men, and no intimacy even with her own brothers, in the sense in which we regard acquaintance or intimacy, is permitted. The mothers, instead of implanting moral principle, instead of infusing a love of virtue, instead of cherishing a high-toned love of purity and chastity as the noblest charm, all which would be a powerful protection, seem to regard all these as nothing, as wholly inefficacious; and they substitute the strictest and sternest superintendence, as if it were the only security for female innocence. They seem to act as if they thought it was morally impossible their daughters should not fall, if only they have a moment's opportunity;—as if they thought their daughters were seeking the opportunity, and were only restrained by the strict superintendence of parental presence. It is not meant here to convey that they think this, but that they act precisely as if they thought this. This is a state of society unknown in England, and almost as unintelligible as it is unknown. And strange to say, all the warm and affectionate intercourse of brothers and sisters, and all the freedom and frankness and confidence of respect and protection that characterises the intercourse of unmarried persons in society in England, are things

utterly unknown and unintelligible in Italy. They are incapable of understanding the existence of any intercourse or intimacy, without danger of the worst vice.

In this state of society, monastic establishments are likely to flourish. The mothers find them an easy and safe place for depositing their daughters, and so saving themselves from all the watchfulness and anxieties which otherwise would be entailed on themselves. And the daughters have but little objection. They feel themselves at home precluded from all social intercourse, and without any society of men of their own age. They feel themselves kept so much pent up within their own solitary homes, under the solitary superintendence of a mother or other elderly woman, that the transition to the walls of a monastery and the prospect of the society of a sisterhood, are at first and before experience, rather objects of desire to many ; while too often the example of their father, and the pattern of their mother, make home loathsome to those who retain any purity of thought or feeling. All this makes the transition easy so far as the daughters are concerned ; while another element has as powerful an influence on the parents.

That which seems to be the governing influence with the parents, next to the desire to secure protection from the vices of the world, a protection supposed to be found in the cloister, is the facility afforded by monasteries for the permanent provision and settlement of their daughters. In England this is contemplated either in connection with a suitable marriage, or with an adequate income for their station in society as unmarried persons. But in Italy this matter is at once settled by the monastic establishments ; for if a parent has once placed his unmarried or unmarri-

ageable daughter in any sisterhood—has once settled her in any nunnery, he is understood to have provided for her and settled her in a most respectable way, having cared alike for her bodily and spiritual requirements. And this is most easily accomplished. A sum equal to from two hundred to five hundred pounds paid to the monastery, secures all that an Italian parent of the class of gentry thinks necessary for his daughter. She becomes after her noviciate one of the sisterhood, and has a legal right to all the privileges of the establishment during her life. The donation required by the several monasteries varies according to the greater or smaller degree of comfort and luxury that reign within. In some monasteries the sisterhood are but poorly off—have little of the comforts of life—have none of its luxuries, and are engaged in teaching or in needlework or such occupation. In others, which are connected with the less rigid orders, the whole style of living is different. The sisters have their own separate apartments—have every comfort in the way of furniture—have decent luxuries of living—have great facilities, where it is not a *clausura*, for receiving the visits of their female friends, and thus enjoy in some respects a very easy life. Admission into the privileges of this latter class requires a donation of from five hundred to a thousand pounds, according to the measure of comforts and luxuries allowed in the several nunneries; the whole system being very judiciously arranged, so as to have monasteries adapted to the wants and the capacities of every class of society.

And all this will appear the more necessary, when it is considered that by the state of society which exists in Italy, a large proportion, even a majority, of the ladies of the higher class must remain unmarried. The custom of

regarding the medical, the legal, and other professions, and all the occupations of mercantile and commercial pursuits, as beneath the younger sons of the higher class, and as unbefitting their station, has left only the church and the army open to them. The army is too limited to provide for more than a very few, and the result is that the great and numerous body of the younger sons of the higher classes are compelled to enter convents, while the rest are constrained by their poverty to remain unmarried. The natural consequence of this is, that a corresponding proportion of the daughters of the same classes must likewise remain unmarried, and as the sight of "an old maid"—one living in a state of "single blessedness," outside the walls of a nunnery, would be as strange a sight in Italy as a man with two heads, all these supernumerary daughters, unmarried or unmarriageable, are consigned to the cloister; not from any predilection for its state, nor from any antipathy to a married life, but from sheer and absolute necessity.

There are thus, two very cogent motives towards the maintenance of nunneries in Italy; one as a means of safe and secure seclusion from the hideous forms of vice and immorality that characterize Italian society;—the other as an easy and convenient means for settling and providing for the unmarried daughters of the land. And thus these establishments are the creatures of convenience rather than of religion.

It is observable too, that these two cogent motives for the maintenance of nunneries in Italy, though motives essentially parental, unveil and discover to us the real causes of novices almost always becoming nuns; and of nuns being unwilling to withdraw from their nunneries,

even when the opportunity has been offered. Of the fact that novices generally become nuns, and that nuns seldom escape from the nunnery, there can be no doubt, though the causes of this phenomenon seem to many a problem of most difficult solution. That solution, however, is intimately connected with the motives of the parents, as already detailed.

The feeling, that the life of the cloister is the only safe and secure protection for an unmarried female, is warmly cherished and most deeply seated ; and it is carefully fostered by the parents, in order to induce their daughters to remain in the cloister. It is no less carefully cherished and fostered by the priesthood, to conceal the penetralia of conventual life ; and so far is this carried, that if a novice, having taken the white veil, should, at the conclusion of her noviciate, refuse to take the black veil, she would be regarded as a reckless and wilful girl, who preferred a life of exposure to the worst temptations in the world, to a life of holiness and peace in a nunnery. Her parents and relations would refuse to receive her ; or, if they did receive her, it would be as a fallen and unhappy one. And as in England, a family would weep broken-hearted over one of their number, who had fallen into sin and shame and sorrow, bringing ruin upon herself, and disgrace upon her family ; just so in Italy, would a family regard the girl who finished her noviciate, and refused to proceed further. She would be kept from contact with her other sisters ; she would be removed out of sight, that no stranger should see her ; her name would never be heard in conversation ; and even in her own family, it would never be breathed unless in those low and whispering tones in which we speak of those that have fallen. With such a prospect

before her, as a matter of certainty, it ceases to be any cause for astonishment, that the young novice should persevere, and lay aside the white veil, and assume the black, becoming a recluse for life.

In the next place, as already stated, a parent is supposed in Italy, to have most fully discharged his duty by his child, when he has placed her in a monastery. She is there regarded as settled and provided for ; and the parent has no further anxiety or responsibility respecting her. He has voluntarily surrendered her to the church, and she has voluntarily married herself to the church. It is manifestly and naturally the interest of parents to keep alive this delusion, that their daughters may not return on their hands to be again settled and provided for. If in England a father has provided for his son by placing him in the church, and secured to him an ample income by settling him in a desirable preferment, it will naturally be a source of grief and pain to the father to see that son, from sheer distaste to the clerical life of restraint, fling up his living, and renounce his sacred profession, and return to the father to be again provided for in some other way. And this is precisely the case with nunneries in Italy. The daughter is as much regarded as provided for in life in the cloister, as is a daughter in England when settled suitably in marriage, or a son in a preferment ; and therefore we can well conceive the difficulties opposed by parents against all recessions from such engagements.

All this supposes that the young female is free—that she has the opportunity or power to withdraw. And therefore all this applies only or chiefly to the novice, to whom the opportunity is nominally offered, of withdrawing if she wishes. The truth is, that she dare not accept this nomi-

nal offer, however much or anxiously she may wish it. The feelings of her own family, and the state of public feeling, impose an insuperable obstacle to her fulfilling her desires, and she passively resigns herself to her hard fate. It is not that she finds her noviciate a happy spring-time, as some have imagined; nor is it that the other nuns, though naturally anxious for some new companion to lighten the dull monotony of the cloister, weave all their arts to fascinate and ensnare the novice—it is not this that impels and precipitates the fatal step, but it is the impossibility of overcoming the obstacles arising from the feelings of her family and the tone of public feeling on the subject. If her parents oppose her wishes, she has no alternative but to take the final plunge, unless indeed she can depend on the honour and love of some man who may have won her affections, and who will open to her a home, and secure to her protection. A curious instance of this kind occurred at Rome, and was narrated to us by a general officer who was present at the time. A young lady was destined by her parents for the cloister. She had regarded herself as the wife of one to whom she was much attached. The parents not approving this marriage, placed her, as is usual in such cases, in a monastery, where she could never see him; and she commenced her noviciate. Before doing so, however, the young gentleman found means to communicate to her, that he would attend in the church at the conclusion of her noviciate; and that if she still loved him and preferred marriage with him to taking the veil, he would be there to claim her, and give her the home and protection which her own family would deny her. The year rolled slowly away. The noviciate had ended. The *profession* was publicly announced—The bells rang merrily

as for a bridal ; the first flowers of spring were blooming on the floor of the monastic chapel. The Cardinal had arrived ; the young novice, fair as the young moon in May, knelt with her white veil floating behind her, and her eye glancing eagerly from face to face in the assembly, till it rested on him, whom during that long and sad noviciate she had never seen, and whose presence at this moment assured her of his faithfulness in the past. The service proceeded till the Cardinal asked the usual question as to her willingness for the life of a cloister ; she at once declared her unwillingness. The Cardinal was astounded. The assembly was greatly excited. And on her being again asked for her reasons, she pointed to the young man who was present, and said plainly, “ My wish is to be married to that gentleman.” She was the next instant on her knees to the Cardinal, beseeching him to forgive her, and to permit the marriage. The feelings of the Cardinal and all the assembly were deeply moved. The service ceased. The Cardinal declared that she must not be received into the sisterhood, as she had herself refused her consent. He made enquiry, and in the end himself married the young couple. And thus she found at once the home and protection she required, and the want of which would otherwise have consigned her against her own wishes to the cloister for ever. This however is a scene that cannot be of frequent occurrence.

But all this applies only to the novice. She only is free. At the last day of her noviciate she is nominally free, and then on assuming the black veil she becomes a prisoner for life. If she escapes from the monastery, or attempts to fly, the law proclaims her an outcast, and all the ministers of justice pursue her as a felon, and she is seized and

punished as a criminal, and confined, if possible, still more closely than before. I cannot say precisely what are the provisions of the law respecting such runaways, but the notion that it is a sin *deserving* death is carefully propagated, and the belief very generally prevails that imprisonment in a dungeon for life is the destined penalty within the walls of a convent. The terrors of the law are thus one great security against any attempt at escape from a nunnery ; as a young female is not likely to undergo the peril, especially as she has no refuge to which she may fly, and must wander friendless and homeless through the world, ever trembling with the fear of discovery. And besides this, escape is next to impossible ; for the monasteries are so constructed that the inmates are as much prisoners within them, as criminals are prisoners in the public jails. The windows are barred ; the gates are chained : the walls are lofty. Exteriorly they always present this sad appearance, and interiorly it is necessary to pass through one, two, and sometimes three massive gates or doors, made as strong as wood and iron can make them, and locked and chained as securely as art can effect. It has always appeared to me when examining these monasteries, that it was not only morally but physically impossible for a young female to make an effectual attempt to escape. She cannot escape ; and if she could, she would immediately be seized by the police and remanded to some worse punishment in her prison.

I have examined the exterior of many monasteries, and have been admitted into the interior of some, so as to be allowed to converse with the nuns at the grating ; my wife has been admitted into the *intima penetralia* of others. The impression left on her mind, as well as on my own,

has been the same—that there is no possibility of escape : and that the nuns remain, in general, not because their home is happy—but because they have no means of leaving it. It is often indeed said, and great care is taken to propagate the idea, that their home is happy—that their occupations are innocent—that their hearts are peaceful ; while all within is a paradise of holiness and happiness, the very type and shadow of our home in the heavens. It is carefully reported, that this fulness of happiness, this repletion of peace, this sweet and holy communion of sister with sister, and total separation from all the ties of family, and all the cares of life, is the real magic that binds, as by a spell, the hearts of novices, and the minds of nuns ; so that they would not exchange their nunneries for the noblest palace—their simple repast for the most joyous of festive scenes—their life of dull monotony for the most brilliant society ; or the companionship of the sisters for the society of the most affectionate of husbands. All this is so often said, that in Italy it is as familiar as a household word ; but all appeared otherwise to us. We felt, that if indeed they were so happy, there was no necessity for such lofty walls to keep them there ; that if indeed all within was such a perfect paradise, there was no need of such pains to prevent their deserting it ; that if all was a type of heaven, it seemed strange to have such bars of iron, and such gratings of iron, to compel these spirits of holiness to remain in the enjoyment of it. In England, these lofty walls, and iron bars, bespeak a jail or a prison, to confine the criminal and prevent his escape ; and certainly in Italy they look as if designed for the same purpose. And it is nothing else than rank hypocrisy, to say that these lofty walls and iron bars are designed for

any other purpose than the enforced constraint and imprisonment of the inmates of the monastery. To so cruel and tyrannical an extent is this imprisonment carried, that no nun is permitted to speak with any one even through the grating, unless in the presence of a second nun as a spy, to prevent any plan of escape, or aught else concerted with the stranger ; or any conversation passing to the prejudice of the monastic life, or to the unveiling the secrets of the nunnery. It is all a part of the system, to surround the inmates with every imaginable check and restraint to preclude the hope and prevent the possibility of escape ; and so secure the nuns as prisoners for life and recluses for ever. At one nunnery, where we were conversing with two nuns at the grating, having visited them in company with the relations of one of them, I observed that the iron was double, the two gratings being some inches apart, so that even hand could not touch hand through them. I asked the reason of such double defence, begging to know whether, as all was such a paradise, it was designed to keep the ladies in, or to keep the gentlemen out. I was merrily answered on the instant, ‘ O Signor, one grating will keep the ladies within, and the other will keep the gentlemen without ! ’

We were wholly unable to remove from our minds the impressions we had received of the real unhappiness and wretchedness of a nun’s life. The impression was created by a number of trifling and petty incidents, which though small in themselves, yet, when taken together, had considerable weight as betraying the real truth so often and so carefully attempted to be concealed ; and, day by day, this impression became deeper and deeper on our minds. And though on every occasion the nuns used to say they were

very happy, and though they mingle loud laughter with every sentence, to shew they are happy, and frisk about at the age of fifty, like hoydening girls of fifteen, to prove themselves happy; and then stand with their mouth stretched as if in a merry smile, to assure the spectator their feelings are pleasurable; yet the constrained and forced character of all this produces the very opposite impression from what is intended. All interviews with a nun must be in the presence of a sister; she is generally one well schooled in her business, and true to the interest of the nunnery; and, in her presence, nothing beyond a look or a glance can escape to tell the tale of sorrow, or the feeling of bitterness and regret.

A gentleman who holds an official station in the papal court, and who from the nature of his office, has been obliged to accompany the cardinal vicar in his visitation of some of the nunneries, communicated to us in private the impressions created on his mind. He was a man of years and experience—was the father of a large family—was a very domestic, amiable, and religious man, for a Romanist—and certainly was the most respectable character, as an Italian gentleman, it was our good fortune to meet in Italy. And we have often congratulated ourselves on our good fortune in making so desirable and valuable an acquaintance.

He and his wife communicated many things which we could not otherwise have learned, and frequently by introductions put us in the way of ascertaining matters in which they themselves could not prudently appear. He used to say, that when the novices became nuns at an early age, as eighteen or twenty, they seemed to be sufficiently happy for two or three years; at least that for that

time there seemed to be nothing remarkable, but that when they became old enough to see and understand well what were the consequences of the step they had taken, and that now there was no hope before them, they soon gave way to sorrow and despair. He spoke with deep feeling of the effect of this on the spirits and appearance of the young ladies. He stated that the broken-hearted look—the shades of deep and indelible sorrow—the lines of settled and unalterable sadness—the expression of resentment or despair that characterized many of these young creatures, used to affect his heart, sadden all his best feelings, and trouble his very dreams. He could not think or speak of the subject without such feelings that the tears would come into his eyes ; saying, that it was inconceivable the number of nuns that went to an early grave under this system. While they were very young they knew not as yet the nature of the step they had taken, and if they lived through some years, so as to survive the feelings of woman's heart, they generally went on in a dull, passive, monotonous life, spending a sort of inanimate existence ; but that there were comparatively few who so survived. Those who awoke to the reality of their state, and thought of all the ties of home and affection, and their exchange of all freedom for the dull monotony and useless employments of the cloister, soon pined and saddened, and sinking into despair, died of madness ; while some others, like gathered flowers, plucked from their native gardens, where they might long have bloomed and gladdened the scene, soon faded and withered and died. He always said that this was the melancholy destiny of the greater portion ; and that nothing on earth could induce him, with the knowledge he possessed, to allow one of his daughters to

take the veil ; for that the majority of nuns at Rome died of madness before they were five and twenty years of age !

Now all this, though very different from our romantic notions on the subject, seems very natural. It is very true that there are some monasteries where the inmates have many privileges and many comforts, and can enjoy life and the world in a measure. There are some too where the nuns occupy themselves in the education of the young, and this gives an object of interest to their hearts and to their minds. There are others also where they are incessantly employed in all kinds of fancy needlework and such-like occupations, which at least furnish some employment, and drive away in a measure the broodings of the heart or of the diseased imagination. But all these are the higher order of nunneries, and are designed for those young females who are able to choose comfortable homes in such establishments. The great majority of the nunneries of Italy are very different. There are no occupations for mind or body—there is no object before the mind ; so that with thousands the heart is left to prey upon itself. Some half an hour's attendance in the chapel twice or three times a day, very little more or longer than the ordinary attendance on family prayers in a well-regulated house in England, is the principal item of their duties. It is true that their bells are constantly ringing at stated hours by day and by night, and the world is taught to believe that these are so many calls to prayer and devotion. But the bells of convents in Italy, as well as of parishes in London, are often rung for other objects than the devotional worship of those within. They are chiefly indicative of the ecclesiastical hours ; and are designed to mark the hours of prayer for those without the walls of the

convent, rather than to intimate the devotion of those within them. If indeed it were indicative of those within assembling for prayer, it would be like a realizing of that which our Lord so solemnly denounced—a sounding a trumpet before them. For the greater part of the day, the sisters are left to themselves, to brood over the remembrance of the past, or to talk to each other about nothing. There they live with far less enjoyment for the present, and infinitely less hope for the future, than those ladies of an eastern harem, on whom we think with so much compassion. The dull insipid monotony of their lives, combined with the absence of education and information, produces a sameness, a tedium, a weariness, that makes the nunnery one of the most hateful of prisons. They have no objects in which they can take an interest; they have no persons on whom their affections may be placed, and they have no means of being practically useful to others. All those affections of the heart that make woman beautiful as a child of nature, are denied to the nun; while all that active benevolence which leads us to do good to others, and is the truest ornament of a child of grace, is also impossible to the avowed recluse. If she has the affections—the feelings—the imagination of woman, there is no appropriate sphere for their exercise, and nothing on which they might live. She soon droops and sinks into the grave, the unhappy victim of her enforced seclusion.

Such a state of existence is not conducive to the growth of a true and healthful religion in the soul. Accordingly it is found, that wherever there is religion in a nunnery, it runs into that wild and prurient thing that we rightly call “monomania,” and results in the most extravagant claims

to visions and revelations. It is the religion of madness ; or perhaps, more correctly speaking, it is madness taking the direction of religion ; and at this none can be surprised. But after all, these cases are not frequent, as there really is very little religion in these nunneries. They are generally designed as a sort of refuge for unmarried females, and religion is merely a name with the great majority of them. Once, my wife and myself, in company with a married couple of Italians, were in consultation with two nuns, related to our friends, one of whom was stating that no man except the Pope himself was ever permitted to enter that monastery. This she spoke of as a privilege of which they had some right to be proud. But while she was speaking, the Confessor made his appearance. He was a good-natured, merry-looking man, of about thirty-five years of age. I have often been struck with the fact, that in almost every instance the Confessors of these nunneries were younger men than myself, even when I married. On his withdrawal, I asked the nun, of what use was the Confessor ? She replied, that it was necessary for the nuns to confess their sins. I said that I understood they had entered the nunnery to escape the sins of the world ;—and I asked, as all temptation to sin was thus supposed to be excluded, what kind of sins had they to confess ? The question perplexed them not a little, and they could only answer me by laughing. I persevered however, and at length they told me, that the nuns had so many quarrels and differences among themselves, that it led to much that required confession and absolution ! I thanked them for the information, and only remarked that this shewed that, after all, the lofty walls and iron bars of a nunnery were no protection against sin. We learned

afterwards that this monastery was distracted by the nuns being divided into three factions, who lived in a state of endless strife.

And I fear that this is too sadly and too frequently the case. The solitude of a nunnery is not the region for the growth of true religion, whether it concerns the healthful tone of the mind, or the exercise of the Christian graces ; and it is much to be feared, that there is a vast deal which passes in the cloister, very widely different from the ostensible purposes of the life of the recluse. It is a curious fact, that in all the lives of holy and sainted nuns that have been given to the world, the arch-tempter is always described as tempting them through the passions. He invariably is made to appear *in the form of a very handsome young man !* It is equally observable, that in the lives of holy monks and sainted friars, the arch-enemy is usually said to have appeared *in the form of a very lovely young female !* All this is very natural ; and it shews, that even within the walls of both the monastery and the convent, the monks and the nuns are sometimes thinking of other subjects than those of heaven.

So far as the convents of monks and friars are concerned in this subject, I have not to deal at present. Every one who knows anything of Italy, and especially of Rome, is aware that the most debauched and profligate characters in the land, are among these inmates of the cloister. At present, the question concerns the moral character of the nunneries. So many things have of late years been stated—so many narratives of vice have been published—so many personal histories of victims to the system have been given, and so much has been said and written as to the

dangers of the confessional, that I feel justified in saying a few words as to the moral state of the nunneries in Italy.

I entertain a favourable opinion of many of these nunneries ; believing that they realize that for which they are designed, namely, a safe retreat for unprotected females, and are conducted in a manner that bespeaks a moral and religious sisterhood. But I entertain a less favourable opinion of others. It should ever be remembered, however, that from the very nature of some of these establishments, there is no possibility of knowing what passes within them. Immured within those lofty walls and iron bars, none can go forth to reveal what may have passed within ; so that though possibly the most hideous forms of vice may reign throughout—though every chamber may be a polluted place—though violence and murder may stain every gallery ; yet there is no voice to tell it to the world. I have already stated, that an official gentleman, who at times was obliged to attend the Cardinal-Vicar at the formal visitation of the monasteries, gave us some information on the subject. His wife informed my wife, that on an occasion shortly before our visit to Rome, they found in a nunnery which they named, and which was not ten minutes walk from our residence, that no less than four of the nuns were *enceinte* ! They were immediately removed to another establishment ; the Reverend Confessor was removed elsewhere ; and the whole affair was kept as secret as possible. It would never have been known, were it not that this nunnery was one of those whose inmates are occupied in teaching the young ladies of Rome ; and young ladies *will* talk. And matters became more canvassed, owing to the impression that the poor Confessor was only

a scape-goat for a higher personage, whose guilt was to be concealed by the dismissal of a subaltern.

But there are some establishments from which even this suspicion could never go forth. They are so closely kept, that mortal eye can never see the *intima penetralia*. The ‘*Sepulte vive*,’ for example, i. e., ‘the buried alive,’ are establishments of this kind. The young creature, as a part of the ceremonial of admission, is laid alive in her coffin; and, when once admitted, she is in fact as if dead and buried to her friends; for she is never allowed to see again father or mother, brother or sister! Once a year, on an appointed day, the parents of ‘the buried alive,’ may attend at the nunnery; and the young creature within may hear their loved and familiar voices, but she must never see them; and, as no kind of intercourse is ever permitted, she can never know whether they are living or dead, except as she hears or does not hear their voices on that day. If a parent has died during the year, the abbess assembles the nuns; she tells them that the parent of one of them is dead, and desires all to pray for the soul of the departed; but she never reveals the name of the dead, so that all the nuns are left in a state of intense and agonizing suspense, till the one day comes round, and all listen to catch the tone of their parents’ voices, and the absence of the longed-for voice tells the tale of the bereaved recluse! Such, at least, is the account the Romans give of these establishments: which thus seem the very climax of cruelty, rending and agonizing the hearts of the inmates under the pretence of a desire to wean them from the world. But that which concerns our present subject is the veil of secrecy that covers all within such establishments as these. There may be—I must not say that there is—

there may possibly be the most frightful vice—there may be the most ruffian violence—there may be the veriest climax of profligacy—there may possibly be all this, and the public never know it. History has recorded the fact, that in the apartments of the Inquisitors of Spain, there were found sixty-two young women, who had been corrupted and ruined by the Inquisitors, and kept there where the public could never know it. The French soldiery flung open the Inquisition, and revealed the secret. There is no security against the same evil in a very large proportion of the nunneries ; for every crime of earth and hell may possibly be rife throughout their cloisters, and the cry of innocence and outraged virtue, stifled within the walls, may remain unheard by the world without. While we were at Rome, an abbess of one of the nunneries rushed forth frantically from the opened gates, plunged into the Tiber, and there sought in its deep waters to drown the memory and remorse of the past ! We were surprised at the pains taken to deny and conceal this fact, though known and witnessed by hundreds. The ecclesiastics could not bear to hear it mentioned.

I feel however that this is a delicate subject ; it is one on which it is impossible to obtain accurate information. I am unwilling to record the many little incidents that came under our observation in our visits ; and I am most unwilling to give currency to the gossip and scandal of Rome or of any part of Italy ; but, when it is recollected that these nunneries are the only institutions for the reception of those fallen ones, ‘more sinned against than sinning,’ for whom Magdalene and Penitentiary asylums exist in England—when it is recollected that the friends of any such unhappy female may place her privately in these

nunneries ; and that the other nuns may know nothing of her history, or whether she has repented or not, and have no voice in her admission to this society ; when all this is recollected, it will be felt that a door is opened to much that may be distressing, if not injurious to the sisterhood. It is universally felt however by the higher and educated classes, that it is wisest and best to say as little as possible on the state of some of these nunneries, especially as with all their faults they form a most useful resource in the present state of Italian society ; and as almost every family has some female relation in them, it becomes the interest of all to suppose and believe the purity of all. I am much disposed to acquiesce in this feeling ; parents in Italy have much to contend with, much that is far worse than the worst that can be justly said respecting the nunneries ; and no one ought to be surprised at the course they pursue : they pursue it not because they regard it as good in itself, but as the best in their power ; and I feel that they deserve our pity more than our censure—our sympathy more than our reproach. In the north of Italy, where the evils of society are not so rife, the tendency to the cloistered life is rapidly diminishing. The progress of knowledge and civilization, leading and encouraging the younger sons of the higher classes to apply themselves to commerce, to manufactures, to the professions, will enable them to take wives from their own class,—will gradually ameliorate the state of society,—will break down many ancient habits and prejudices,—and this will be the surest blow to the existence of nunneries.

These remarks are intended to apply, as indeed they are applicable, only to the *clausura*—only to those nunneries where the sisters are strictly confined, and precluded

course with the world. There are some which
are really monasteries, and really take the
discipline of the young ladies, and

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tic orders. In
some of these
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siderable de-
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sisters, but
these are not
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asteries, or
numerics, as
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to the class of
the cloisters.

CHAPTER VI.

TAKING THE VEIL.

THE ROMANCE CONNECTED WITH NUNNERIES—SCENE AT THE TAKING THE WHITE VEIL OR COMMENCING THE NOVICIATE AT THE MONASTERY DELLE TURCHINE—A SECOND INSTANCE OF A VESTIZIONE AT THE MONASTERY OF DOMINICO E SISTO—SCENE OF THE PROFESSION OR TAKING THE BLACK VEIL AT THE MONASTERY OF ST. JOSEPHINE OF THE ORDER OF ST. THERESA.

CHAPTER VI.

TAKING THE VEIL.

THE subject of nunneries, invariably called monasteries in Italy, is one of no ordinary interest ; it is associated in our minds with an infinity of romance, arising perhaps from the tales of love, of adventure, and generally of romance, so much read and prized in the days of our youth. A nunnery is seldom presented to the mind, without some visions of lovely forms and faces,—some gentle and timid damsel there concealed from her rude pursuer ; some love-sick maiden there secluded to debar all intercourse with the youth of her affections ; some broken-hearted girl there brooding in secret over blighted hopes and disappointed love ; some ancient abbess with the traces of early beauty, receiving as a mother the heart-broken girl, and by the tale of her own early loves soothing her sorrows : a nunnery is seldom presented to some minds without associations of this nature, giving to them the impress of romance. Nor is this altogether without a deep foundation ;—there is in every mind a feeling called forth by mystery, and especially by mystery connected with female life, and the world pre-

sents no deeper mystery than a nunnery. It is known that a nunnery is a prison ; that the inmates cannot escape ; that lofty walls and strong bars and iron gratings effectually confine them ; that females of the most tender years, even at the very age when the world looks brightest, are placed there and are seen no more—that however their minds may change, they cannot change their residence ; however they may change their religious opinions, they cannot change their church ; however unhappy in their feelings, insulted, injured, or oppressed, there is no opening, no way of escape, no hope, all is silence, and the hopelessness of silence, for ever. The mystery that thus hangs around the life of a nunnery, will ever invest it with a peculiar interest ; and especially so when it is recollected that those whose fate is thus concealed and mysterious, are young, feeble, and confiding females, capable of making others happy by their affections, but precluded for ever from the opportunity, exposed in their weakness and want of protection, to harshness and ill-usage, even to the most dreadful of injuries ; and yet not only consigned to eternal silence, but confined within prisons, so close as to preclude the possibility of the tale going forth to awake the sympathies of the world.

It is impossible to omit this subject, in an account of my pilgrimage to Rome. However disposed to pass by a question presenting great difficulties of treatment, it forces itself on the mind. The number of nunneries lifting their tall walls and grated windows like vast prisons in every part of the city, prevent the possibility of ignorance ; and the constant receptions, the *vestizione* and the *professione*, as they call the taking the white or black veil, make the system a frequent topic of conversation among strangers ;

while those establishments, intimately connected as they are with the provision and settlement of young females in Italy, always make it a subject of interesting discussion in Italian society.

There was in January a "*vestizione*" or taking the white veil at the monastery "Delle Turchine." It is so called from the nuns being dressed in blue robes.

On approaching the monastery I was struck with the profusion of flowers that strewed the entrance. Early as the season then was, when in our colder climate there is neither bloom nor perfume—neither verdure nor blossom from the flower, there was a profusion of what seemed to me to be wild flowers of every hue of the rainbow, mingling with sprigs of leafy green from many and various shrubs. They lay scattered beneath our feet in profusion. The steps were covered with little sprigs of evergreens and other plants, and all gave the appearance of a coming bridal or joyous fête. Even the street in which the monastery stands was strewn to a considerable extent with these emblems of rejoicing at the nuptials of one more maiden to her Heavenly Spouse. It is in this light they affect to regard such events. Certainly it is in this language they speak of them, and they write their epithalamia, and circulate their sonnets, among those who assemble to witness this so-called spiritual marriage.

We found at the entrance two soldiers. With bayonets fixed and muskets shouldered, they stood as sentinels at each side of the chapel-door. We passed and found about one half the chapel open without seats, and the other half next the high altar enclosed and arranged with benches for the spectators. At the entrance to this enclosed part, there stood two other soldiers as sentinels. Three priests

were celebrating a mass at the side-altar, and the whole congregation consisted of the two soldiers, my companion, who was an Italian gentleman, and myself; that is, the priests who officiated were *three* in number, and the congregation who attended there were *four* persons. The floor of the chapel was profusely strewn with flowers.

I selected my position at the advice of my companion. And the result proved his discretion. I observed that the High Altar was loaded with large vases, filled with enormous bunches of artificial flowers, which looked shewy but tasteless. These vases were four in number. In the centre of these vases was a small cradle. This cradle was filled with roses, white and red, and, lying in all its nakedness, in the midst of the roses, was a little wax baby, about ten or twelve inches in length. The head of the cradle was elevated, so that the whole figure of the baby was visible. Indeed it was very far from a delicate exhibition, considering the place where it lay, but the modest nuns, to save their own modest blushes, laid over it a piece of lace, so thin and transparent that it only proved their consciousness of the indelicacy. I could not imagine it designed for anything but "Young Love among the roses," and yet that seemed a strange device on the altar of a nunnery. My companion said it was Jesus Christ in his cradle, and when I suggested that it was better to represent the Saviour in his manhood, my companion replied, that He was represented as an infant, *because it was not right the NUNS should see him as a MAN!* A reason so sage had never occurred to my simplicity before.

In a short time the masses were finished, and before long the seats were occupied with persons coming to witness the scene. The Cardinal Vicar—to whose province the

reception of nuns belongs, arrived. He robed, assumed his mitre, held his crosier, and seated himself in the front of the High Altar. He was robed in silver tissue brocaded with gold.

In a few moments the destined Bride of Jesus Christ entered. She was led into the chapel and along the aisle by the Princess Borghese. They knelt for a few moments at the side-altar, and then the Princess conducted her to the Cardinal-Vicar. They both knelt to him, and as the candidate bent her head, her long, rich tresses of chesnut-coloured hair fell like a veil around her, and gave her a peculiar interest. He then blessed a crucifix and presented it to the kneeling novice. The carrying of this crucifix is invariable in the order of St. Theresa. I could not catch the words that passed, though I was not four yards distant from the parties. They rose and retired to seats prepared for them at the right of the Cardinal-Vicar.

This destined recluse, or Bride of Jesus Christ, was dressed specially for the occasion. Her dress was white satin richly damasked in gold. Her head was adorned with a diadem of diamonds, beneath which fell a profusion of long and luxuriant curls of rich chesnut-coloured hair. Her neck was covered with precious stones, that flashed through the many ringlets that fell among them. Her breast was gemmed with brilliants, set off by black velvet, so that she sparkled and blazed in all the magnificence of the jewels of the Borghese family, said to be among the most costly and splendid in Italy. There was a profusion of the most valuable lace, and a long and light train of gauze elegantly trimmed. This was borne by one of those beings of whom it is said that their visits are "few and far between." It was an angel, or rarer still, a seraph. It had the appear-

ance of a little girl of eight years of age, a pretty, gentle thing, that seemed frightened at such close contact with sinful mortals. It had a wreath of no earth-born, but finger-made, flowers upon its head. It had a short, a very short dress of pale blue silk, to shew it was some creature of the skies. Its arms and its neck and its legs were covered, not as in mortals with skin, but with a silken texture that was coloured like flesh, and to place its heavenly nature beyond doubt, it had two wings, regular feather-wings, projecting from the shoulders, and very airily trimmed with swan's down. There could be no doubt that, if not an infant angel, it was a real sylph or seraph, descended from the skies to wait on the destined Bride of Jesus Christ.

After some moments the Reverend Confessor, attired in his monkish dress, approached—kissed the hand of the Cardinal-Vicar, and seated himself within the chancel. He then proceeded to deliver an address or sermon to the destined novice. It dwelt at much length and with great justice on the vanities of the world, its temptations, its snares, its dangers and its sins. It then dwelt on the value, the safety, and the happiness of a religious life. The preacher expatiated on the important step she was preparing to take, and by which she would effectually escape the evils of the world, and secure the advantages of a religious life. The sermon was well and effectively delivered, and would have been faultless, only that it identified a religious life with a cloistered life, and argued throughout as if no woman could be religious outside the walls of a nunnery—as if in the world there was no protection from the sins of the world, and as if the life of religion could only be found in the life of a nunnery.

At the conclusion of this address, some words passed between the Cardinal-Vicar and the destined novice ; I could not catch their purport, as all was in an under-tone, and did not seem to accord with the forms in the Pontifical which I held in my hand. It appeared to me as if she was asking admission into the sisterhood, or as if he was asking her wishes. At all events, he soon rose and conducted her out of the church. There was the Cardinal in all his robes, his mitre on his brow, holding the shepherd's crook or crosier in his hand. On he moved, down the aisle, with the damsel in silk and gold, tiara of diamonds and cincture of gems. On she moved with her little angel to bear her train, and the young Princess Borghese to bear her company. On they moved, with attendants, down the chapel, and entering the monastery, disappeared from view.

We remained for some moments in suspense. Many doubted if we should ever see again this supposed Bride of Heaven or her attendant seraph. At length a curtain was raised at the side of the altar, and revealed an interior chapel. It was separated from that in which we were assembled by a strong grating of iron. Soon were heard the voices of the whole sisterhood. They were chanting some litany, and their voices were first heard coming from some distant gallery. It was faint and feeble, but sweetened by distance. It slowly swelled louder and clearer, as the sisterhood approached in slow and solemn procession, and recalled to my mind what had so often in the days of romantic youth, filled my imagination in reading of the chants and the processions of nuns in the romances of other days. The effect at the moment was very pleasing. The chant, feeble and distant at first, and then becoming louder and clearer, and all who so chanted approaching slowly,

and all the associations that gathered and crowded on my mind, gave a charm to the moment that I shall long remember.

The chant ceased, and from my position I could see the nuns, about sixteen in number, with three or four novices, enter the interior chapel and move slowly and solemnly around it, all taking their station in two lines, at right angles with the iron grating. The two lines faced each other. Each nun bore a large lighted candle in one hand, and a book in the other. They were dressed in blue over white serge. The nuns had a black shawl or napkin of black serge thrown over the head. The novices had a similar thing of white serge, but of the colour of white flannel. Their faces were not visible, as those cloths, which are most unromantic things, though most romantically called veils, while they might more suitably be called shawls, hung down so as to hide the side-face, while the front-face, which was open and unveiled, was bent down on their books. In this position they stood and read some office or service in which the lines of nuns took alternate parts. They were motionless as statues, and might have passed for such, if their voices had not proved them living.

While this was transacting in the interior chapel, the Cardinal Vicar again entered our outer chapel and proceeded to the iron grating. Some questions passed between him and the abbess, also between him and the future nun, all the attendants and officers of the Cardinal and priests, gathering round the grating, as if to prevent our seeing anything. They affected to be very anxious to see for themselves; but on this as on all similar occasions, they endeavoured to make everything mysterious by concealment. I was resolved however that I would not be disappointed;

and I found them sufficiently courteous, not to prevent me looking over the shoulder of a priest. The destined nun was on her knees inside the grating. The princess Borghese was beside her, directing her maid to take off the tiara and other jewels; no other hands—not even the hands of the nuns, were allowed to touch a diamond; they were the jewels of the Borghese family, and the princess and her maid watched every stone till they were all carefully removed by their own hands, and deposited safely from any light fingers that might possibly be present, even in the sacred interior of a monastery of nuns! At last every diamond was gone, and then the hair—the beautiful hair with its luxuriant tresses, its long wreathy ringlets of rich and shining chesnut, was to be now cut off. It was the loveliest charm she possessed, and in parting with the world, its pleasures and its sorrows, together, she was to part with that which of all else had attracted the admiration of men; she meekly bowed her head to her sad destiny. Lo! they touched it and it was gone! as if by a miracle it was gone! alas—that my pen must write the truth, it was a wig! Much of my romance had already fled when I saw the princess Borghese watch with so suspicious an eye the jewels, as if they were in danger even among the nuns; and that suspiciousness in one who must have known them well seemed strange; but now all ideas of romance were annihilated, as by the touch of a magic wand, at the sight of the wig. I do not know why a wig should have excited so much of the ludicrous, but on so romantic a person as a novice, and on so romantic an occasion as taking the white veil, I could not resist a laugh at the wig.

The Cardinal was to give the tonsure by cutting off a lock of her hair; to sprinkle holy water on her; to anoint

her, &c. ; but I could not see this part of the ceremony, and then as they were about to strip off her fine silk, satins, lace, &c., they very properly dropped the curtain. In a few moments it was again raised, and all the nuns seemed as if, like statues, they had never moved, the only exception was the novice herself, she was kneeling at the grating, dressed in blue and white serge, with a crown of gold or tinsel upon her head, it was the crown or diadem of virginity. There was then a short service, some sprinkling of holy water, some offering of prayer, the benedictions, and all concluded. The nuns might be seen retiring with their candles still lighted and their books still open, and their crosses on their arms, moving on one by one, accompanied by the new member of the sisterhood of Theresa ; they disappeared and the congregation rapidly dispersed.

The last scene was still to be acted ; it was at the inner doors of the monastery ; they were flung wide, and revealed the novice standing in the hall within ; she looked flushed, but shewed no sign of feeling, either of pleasure or of pain. All pressed to look at her and speak to her, but all turned away grieved and pained at her vulgar and unfeeling manner, while her poor sister, a girl of about eighteen, stood beside her, kissing her and weeping in such an agony of tears, as if her heart would break. The novice lost all the interest, while the feeling, fond, affectionate sister absorbed all the gentle sympathies of the spectators ; but there were other feelings and of a different kind awakened by another part of the scene : At each side of the novice, at the distance of about a yard, and leaning against the door-posts, stood two nuns all blue and black, with their black serge veils covering their heads and faces so effectually as that none could see them, while they could themselves see perfectly

through the slender opening. There they stood motionless as the posts of the doors; there they stood watching every movement and listening to every word the novice spoke; there they stood like the mutes at a funeral; there they stood like two mute officers of the inquisition; they seemed like two spies keeping close watch and ward over their victim; and "those two horrid nuns!" was the exclamation on the lips of many a spectator. I do believe that the sight of these two mute but watchful listeners; watching their victim lest she should escape, or express a wish or a word they would not like—had more effect on many of the English ladies present in dissipating all the dreams of romance, than the most clear and cogent reasoning against the system of the monastery.

The object of this display is soon told; the gates of the monastery on such occasions are opened wide, the novice is placed at the gates as if with permission and power to depart, if she wishes; but instead of departing she there bids farewell to her friends and to the world together. The scene is arranged to create the impression that the sisterhood do not compel her to remain, and that she can escape if she wishes. But alas! if she wished it with all her heart and soul it were all in vain, the two nuns—these two mute but vigilant watchers, are ready to seize her. The two soldiers stood as guard near to interpose, six soldiers stood as guard at the outer gates: and thus with the shew of liberty there was an impossibility of escape. Soon afterwards the gates were closed, and the priesthood of Rome secured one more recluse from the living world, or one more victim for themselves, within those walls whose scenes shall never be known till the last trumpet shall sound in the great day.

And now, it may be asked, who was this young and hopeless novice, this new object of interest and heroine of romance? It is not unfrequently that the romantic idea of a nunnery is dissipated by the sober realities of Rome : where there are few things of which the real and ideal are more essentially different.

On the present occasion the charm of the scene was dispelled by the fact, that the young, the gentle, the loving, the interesting object of our romance, who had just parted from the pleasures of the bright and sunny world of splendid courts and fashionable revels, was—A SERVANT MAID OF ABOVE FORTY YEARS OF AGE! She was the maid of the princess Borghese, and the daughter of another domestic, and had now changed the service of the princess, where she was a menial, for a life in a monastery, where she was an equal of the sisterhood. The princess, in a foolish pride, displayed the jewels of the family. And thus the absurd mockery was performed, of one parting from costly robes and brilliant gems, and exchanging them for the simple serge and lowly attire of a recluse. It seemed as if she was forsaking a world of ease and pleasure, and a life of riches and splendour, for the humble retirement of a religious life. And thus a servant, who had never possessed a diamond before, was bedecked with diamonds ; one who had never worn satin was robed in the richest satin ; a menial was dressed as a princess, to shew the pleasures she was forsaking, and the riches she was renouncing ! It was a living and paraded falsehood.

The forms observed at every *vestizione* or taking the white veil, are not always the same. We were particularly struck with this in the monastery of Dominico e Sisto ; on the *vestizione* of a lady described in the papers, usually cir-

culated on those occasions, as “a noble and illustrious damsel.” She was accompanied by her Serene Highness the Duchess of Saxony, sister to the Grand Duke of Lucca. And there was therefore an ample display of costly apparel and of brilliant diamonds, as seemed befitting the high rank of the parties. The forms of the ceremonial did not much differ from that already detailed, except that as the lady knelt to the Cardinal he cut off one little lock of her hair in the presence of the congregation, and then, without removing her diadem of diamonds, they placed the crown of virginity upon her head, and thus attired he conducted her through the Church into the monastery. On this occasion the cutting her hair and crowning her was done in the public chapel, in the midst of the congregation and before entering the monastery; but on the other occasion all this was performed in the private chapel in the midst of the nuns, and after her entrance into the monastery. In some nunneries the candidate is laid in a coffin to represent her death to the world, but we did not witness this.

At the conclusion of this *vestizione*, the scene was widely different. There was a small gallery. From this there was a large and capacious apartment or hall. It was entirely open at the end adjoining the gallery. Into this gallery we were admitted, but soldiers stood on guard to prevent our entering the spacious apartment or hall. And strange indeed was the scene that burst upon our astonished senses. There sat the Cardinal-Vicar in a most capacious chair. At each knee sat an elderly nun—regular old crones—doing the polite thing by incessantly talking to him, and looking as excited as possible to shew their happiness. In the interior of the apartment were ten or twelve

other nuns. They were all unveiled, that is, the black shawl or piece of serge which is fastened at the back of the neck was not thrown over the head, but flung back on the shoulders. Their faces were open to every eye, and between their age, which was not that of beauty, and their style of dress, which was far from becoming, they presented on the whole a very unromantic appearance. There was one indeed who was very pretty, my wife and myself were particularly struck with her appearance, but with that exception there was as little as possible of the romance of a nunnery. There they were running hither and thither, now at one end of the apartment, and now at another ; at one moment bringing some sweatmeats to the cardinal, at another bringing some ice ; and at the next moment producing some liquid, the nature of which I could not divine, but appearing to be lemonade. Hither and thither they ran and skipped like children, and leaped and laughed like school-girls : and seemed as if all had resolved to look as happy as possible—as if it were necessary to seem the happiest family the world had ever seen—as if the spectators were to learn that the happiest spot in creation was the Eden within the interior of a nunnery. And this they did in the most artificial and unnatural way in the world. Old women were giggling like girls, and crones of sixty skipped about as if they were only twenty : all presenting the appearance of most stupid acting—an absurd affectation of all the joyousness and sportiveness of youth—a nunnery of some ten or twelve elderly ladies, averaging some forty or fifty years of age, affecting the manner and aping the mirth and merry laughter of girls of seventeen or twenty years. To make the matter more absurd, they affected never to see one of the spectators ; not less than

fifty persons, of whom at least thirty were gentlemen, were looking on them, and stood before them, laughing all the time ; but the nuns all affected never to have observed them, and played their gambols and carried on their giggling, as if they were wholly concealed from the gaze of the world ! The only quiet person among them was the young and pretty nun already referred to.

In the midst of this scene, the novice sprang into the apartment from the interior of the convent ; she was excited, flushed, and seemingly hysterical ; she had been white as a lily during the ceremony, and pale as parian marble as she entered the monastery, but now the sweetest pink and most brilliant red shone on her face. The English ladies with one voice pronounced her rouged. At all events, she literally danced or capered into the hall, and like a girl breaking from school, and springing away to play, she rushed through the other nuns, and all smiles and laughter, dropped on her knees to the cardinal, kissed his hand, thanked him for all he had done, and rising, took her seat beside him. All this was evident acting, and the effect of the whole scene on the English spectators was the full conviction that all the appearance of joy and happiness was 'got up' for the occasion. It was so artificial and unnatural that it proved the absence of real happiness.

The ceremony of taking the black veil is naturally invested with a deeper interest than that of the white veil. This latter is the commencement of the noviciate or year of trial, and the step is not irrevocable. But the former, usually called the *professione*, or black veil, is the conclusion of the noviciate, and the commencement of the regular life of the professed nun. When once this ceremony is passed—when once the vow is taken, and the black veil

assumed, the step is irrevocable ; their religious principles make it irrevocable ; their civil laws proclaim it irrevocable. The individual is a recluse for life, and only death can release her.

This great and final step is thus invested with an extraordinary interest—an interest rendered still deeper by the mysterious veil of secrecy and silence that hangs over all that follows it. This ceremony was about to take place at the monastery of St. Josephine ; I attended early to secure a choice of position.

There was mass celebrated on the occasion for a small congregation ; the three priests were robed in cloth of gold ; their vestments were singularly rich, there being nothing visible but gold. Beyond this, there was nothing remarkable but the age of the officiating priest. His two assistants were men of about thirty-five years of age, while he himself was not more than twenty-five. He was a fine young man, and seemed deeply impressed with the awful mysteries in which he was engaged. If the destined nun had been the dear and cherished idol of his heart of hearts from his first love till this moment, he could not have shewn deeper or more devotional feelings ; and I could not but feel prepossessed by his manner ; though I thought it strange, that one so young in years should have been selected on so public an occasion for the chaplaincy of a nunnery.

The mass ended ; the priests retired ; the cardinal arrived. The moment he was announced as at the doors of the chapel, the novice, who was about to assume the black veil, appeared as by a miracle over the altar. To understand this it is necessary to observe, that the picture over the altar was removed, and there appeared a grating behind

it ; it proved an opening to an inner chapel within the interior of the monastery. This, I confess, did startle me a little, it shewed that these *sacred pictures* are sometimes *secret doors*, the very last things that should be desired in a nunnery ; it suggested strange thoughts. At this grating, however, there knelt a living novice, a young female of about eighteen ; she was dressed as a novice ; the white veil was thrown back ; her face was open to view ; she held a lighted candle in one hand ; she had a black crucifix with a white figure on her other arm ; her eyes were fixed immoveably on this crucifix. And as she knelt in that elevated place above the altar, visible to every eye, a living nun in all the reality of flesh and blood, in the fulness of youth, instead of the mere pictured representation usually presented there—as she then knelt with her veil, her candle, her crucifix, and all the perspective of an inner chapel behind her, with its groined roof, and its adorned and crimson hangings in the distance—as she there knelt to take the great and final step, which nothing but death could ever retrace, she became the object of universal sympathy, and the centre on which every eye was turned.

The Cardinal entered—passed to the altar—made his private devotions, and, taking no more notice of the novice kneeling over the altar, than if she were the mere picture usually there, he seated himself, while his attendants stripped him of his Cardinal's robe of scarlet, as is usual, and proceeded in the presence of the congregation to robe him in his episcopal vestments. He soon appeared with the mitre upon his brow, his shepherd's crook in his hand, and his whole person enveloped in silver tissue set off by trimmings and fringes of gold. He sat with his back to the altar.

After the Cardinal had thus completed his toilet in the

presence of the congregation, the confessor of the monastery approached him—kissed his hand—took a chair, and seating himself, addressed the novice on the step she was about to take. He told her it was meritorious—that by it she was about to be wedded to her most loved and loving husband whom she had chosen, even to Jesus Christ—that in taking this step she was preserving her virgin state, making herself like the angels of heaven—and that when she did she would be worthy of Paradise. The whole address seemed that of a kindly-natured man, very much like the amiable, warm-hearted father of a family; but going throughout on the assumption that the interior of a nunnery was the only spot in our creation where female innocence and purity could be preserved! He was apparently a man of quiet mind, and full of good nature and good humour. He seemed under forty years of age, and considering he was younger than myself, and withal an unmarried man, I thought him rather too young to be the confessor of a nunnery. St. Paul recommends us to “provide things honest in the sight of all men.”

After this address, the Cardinal knelt and prayed. The novice rose from her knees and disappeared. The choir executed some fine music and singing. The Cardinal chanted some petitions. The choir chanted some responses. The Cardinal then again knelt and offered a long prayer.

As he was uttering the concluding words of his prayer, there mingled with his voice the tones of distant music. It came from the depths of the monastery, where the sisterhood commenced some chant that at first was softened and sweetened by distance, and then slowly grew loud and more loud as the nuns moved through the interior chapel. From the position where I stood, I could see all the upper

but not the lower part of this chapel. I was able also to see the crucifix and other decorations over its altar, but not being able to see the lower part of the chapel I could not look on the nuns, but was obliged to content myself by listening to their voices as they sung some litany, and slowly approached us. The effect of this was very pleasing, perhaps the more so from the voices being the voices of the unseen and unknown, over whose story there hangs and will hang a veil of mystery for ever. They approached the back of the altar of the chapel where we were assembled. Immediately the novice appeared again over the altar, her white veil or shawl flung back and drooping on her shoulders, her left arm supporting a crucifix, her right hand grasping a lighted candle. She knelt as before, as still and motionless as if she were no more than the picture, whose place she occupied. Beside her stood two nuns, one on each side, concealed or rather intended to be concealed from view. They wore the black veil. She then chanted a few words. The bishop rose, and he and the novice then chanted some questions and answers which I could not understand. She then disappeared, and again appeared at a side-door, where the Cardinal approached, spoke to her, touched her, sprinkled holy water and returned to his place. The priests and officials crowded around the Cardinal and novice, so that it was impossible to see, and, all was uttered in a tone so low that it was impossible to hear. The whole time did not exceed two or three minutes, when she again presented herself on her knees at the grating over the altar, no longer a novice in the white veil, but a nun in the black veil—a recluse and prisoner for life!

After kneeling for a moment she uttered a few words in

a low tone, so that I could not catch their import. The Cardinal immediately rose and chanted certain short orisons or petitions, which were responded to by the nuns. He chanted in the outer and they in the inner chapel. This was succeeded by some music ; during the continuance of which, the Cardinal knelt before the altar, and the nun above it. At its conclusion the Cardinal rose and read an address or exhortation, and immediately the scene was changed. The two nuns, who had concealed themselves till now, presented themselves suddenly, standing one on each side of the kneeling nun. It was one of those scenes that lay hold of the imagination, and it had a striking effect. The two nuns, veiled so closely that their own mothers if present, could not have recognised them, placed a crown of gold upon the head of their new and kneeling companion. She, though wearing the black veil, had it thrown back, or rather so arranged as to leave her face open to view, falling from her head gracefully upon her shoulders. Over this they placed the crown. It was composed of sprigs and wreaths of gold ; it was light and elegant. They spoke not a word, but they placed the crown on her head with considerable care, sparing neither time nor trouble to make it sit well and becomingly. It was done, and as these two nuns stood veiled, silent and motionless—as the new recluse remained kneeling, holding a candle in one hand, having a crucifix resting on the other, her black veil parted so as to reveal her face, her crown of gold upon her head—as these three figures appeared at the grating, elevated above the altar so that every eye could see them, and as the fatal reality pressed on the mind that from that moment they were hopelessly immured for life, they presented a scene that will be remembered for ever by all who witnessed it.

The service continued for a few moments longer. The Cardinal sprinkled some holy water towards the nun, offered a prayer and pronounced the benediction. The two nuns withdrew their new sister into the recesses of the monastery, and the congregation dispersed.

I could not but feel that there was much of mockery in all this. The young girl was placed before the public eye, that the world might see that all was her own spontaneous act. But instead of placing her in the midst of her relatives, to whom she might communicate her feelings, instead of placing her amongst the congregation, who might sympathise with her, they exclude her from both the one and the other; and thus instead of giving her the option of making herself a prisoner for life, they actually make her a prisoner before-hand! She stood indeed without manacles or fetters, but it was behind bars of iron; and though she said she was a willing prisoner, yet the words came from behind a grating stronger than that of a felon's jail—from a prison from which it was impossible to escape. And when all was over and her mysterious destiny signed and sealed as it were for ever; and when the moment came for her farewell to the world—to her parents—to her brothers—to her sisters, I was admitted by the kindness of a priest and witnessed that last farewell. The same prison-grating of heavy bars of iron, crossing and recrossing each other, separated her from her own flesh and blood, so that even her mother and her sisters could not touch her! They talked, and—I am unwilling to express my feelings. A nun, as she stands behind the iron grating is always an interesting sight, especially where there is youth and loveliness, and perhaps a weeping eye and a breaking heart; but the sight of this young girl when taking her last farewell,

dissolved as by magic the charm of such a scene. She was very ugly, her eyes squinted, her lips were thick as a negro's. Her features were intensely coarse, and her whole voice and manner were low, vulgar, and characterized by the most unseemly merriment. She was much excited, laughing broadly and talking loudly, a peal of words incessantly bursting from her lips. "Oh!" she exclaimed to her little niece, while pointing to her crown of gold, "is it not a fine thing to be made a nun?" Her friends seemed to me perfectly satisfied at being well rid of so unmarketable a concern. I had been deeply interested in the ceremony, but was thoroughly disgusted with its victim.

I have been cured, however deeply the disease may have penetrated, of all association of even one romantic thought with the idea of a nunnery; and for this I am indebted to our pilgrimage to Rome.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HIGH CEREMONIES.

THE SCENIC OR DRAMATIC CHARACTER OF THE HIGH CEREMONIES—
IGNORANCE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE—CEREMONIES REPRESENTING THE
NATIVITY—THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI—THE MANIFESTATION TO
THE GENTILES—THE PURIFICATION OR FEAST OF CANDLES—PALM
SUNDAY—THE ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM—THE SUFFERINGS OF
OUR LORD—THE WASHING THE FEET AND THE LAST SUPPER—THE
JUDGMENT—HALL OF PILATE—THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF
OUR LORD—FORGIVENESS AND BLESSING—CONVERSION OF THE JEWS
—DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OR GIFT OF TONGUES—THE GA-
THERING OF THE GENTILES—THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST AND TRI-
UMPH OF THE CHURCH, OR CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HIGH CEREMONIES.

It is frequently stated that the ceremonies and worship of the Church of Rome are *symbolical*. And it is sometimes argued that those ceremonies and worship, though scarcely justifiable when viewed in themselves, may be justified when considered in reference to those things which they are designed to symbolize.

It has always appeared a sufficient answer to this to say, that if the symbol in itself involve anything wrong or forbidden—if it involve anything contrary to the letter or alien to the spirit of Revelation, then it is wrong and unjustifiable in itself, and cannot possibly become transmuted into that which is right and justifiable, by any alchemy in the system of symbols.

For example.

If a Christian kneel in worship before Venus, the Goddess of Beauty, as the symbol of "The beauty of Holiness,"—if he join in the foul and licentious debaucheries of her worship, as the symbol of the happiness enjoyed in holiness,—if he bend the knee in prayer to the image of Mi-

nerva, the Goddess of Wisdom, as the symbol of the Divine wisdom,—it should never be argued that the symbolical character or intention of such acts, can be any real justification of that which is wrong or forbidden in itself. If the act be wrong in itself—if the mode of worship be forbidden, it can never be justified by calling it ‘symbolical.’

If, in like manner, and according to the same process of reasoning, a Christian worship the Virgin Mary as the symbol of the purity of the church—if he religiously venerate the bones of some departed saint, as the symbol of a religious reverence for the spirit of holiness in those that have died—if he bend the knee in prayer before the image of a martyr, as the symbol of admiration for the church once militant, and now triumphant—if he adore the crucifix as the symbol of salvation by the blood of the Redeemer—it ought never to be argued that such acts are right and justifiable, merely on the plea that they are intended as symbolical. If not right or justifiable in themselves, such acts, whether of ceremony or worship, can never be divested of their true character, merely by calling them or intending them as symbolical.

The true and short answer to the argument, however, is, —that it is a mistake to regard these things as *symbolical*, whereas their real character is *scenical*: that is, that the high ceremonies are an attempt to represent the great and leading facts of the gospel history in a dramatical or theatrical form. The causes of this are easily explained.

The ignorance of the population of Italy, both ecclesiastics and laics, respecting the Holy Scriptures, is complete and total. I had heard from one, who had resided ten years at Rome, that one copy of the sacred volume in the language of the people could not be procured, unless in secret, in any

bookselling establishment at Rome. The surprise and incredulity with which I heard this statement, determined me to test it, and to judge for myself respecting what appeared so strange an exaggeration. I soon ascertained the address of every such establishment in the city, and commenced my tour of research. I visited in person every shop, and in every shop was informed that they had no copy of the Holy Scriptures in the language of the people. I asked on every occasion, why they did not possess so important a book, and on every occasion they replied, *non è permesso*—‘it is not permitted;’ or *è proibito*—‘it is prohibited.’ The result was the fullest confirmation of the statement which was made to me; for I could not obtain a portable copy in the establishment of any bookseller in Rome. I found two copies of Martini’s edition in twenty-four volumes, capable of being bound in eight or ten volumes, and at the cost of 105 francs, or above four pounds sterling, equal relatively to six pounds in this country. Under this price, so truly prohibitive, the volume could not be procured, and on suggesting the importation of a cheap and portable edition, the various booksellers stated that the prohibition was designed against the sale of the Holy Scriptures in any cheap or portable form, the object being to prevent their circulation. Indeed so great was the ignorance as to the nature of the Holy Scriptures, though familiar with their name, that one of the most respectable booksellers there presented to me a copy of Calmet’s Dictionary of the Bible, and insisted that it was the Bible itself, and I was obliged to leave his shop without being able to convince him to the contrary!

It was to obviate this ignorance, that the high ceremonies of the church of Rome were originated. They had their

birth in a desire to implant a knowledge of the great facts of the gospel history in the mind of the population. And, although undoubtedly the ministry of the church ought to have promoted this knowledge by the more legitimate means of increasing the circulation of the Scriptures, and teaching the people to read them ; yet they are not altogether blameable in attempting it in the manner which they adopted. They adopted the method of dramatic or theatrical representation. Throughout the middle ages, it was usual to dramatize portions of the sacred story, turning the churches into a sort of theatre for such representations. Having adopted, with the best intentions, though most mistakenly, like all else in the strange spirit of the times, the system of dramatic or theatrical representation, it was usual, when any great event of gospel history was about to be commemorated in its course, as the Nativity, or the Epiphany, or the Crucifixion, or the Resurrection, or the descent of the Holy Spirit, to make arrangements for its being acted. This system still continues, with only this difference, that some of the characters formerly acted by bishops and priests, are now represented by figures in wax. This, then, is the true characteristic of the high ceremonies of the church of Rome. They are not *symbolical* but *scenical*. And now to illustrate this.

I.—THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD.

The first great event in the gospel history which has been made the subject of this kind of religious drama, is the Nativity or Birth of our Lord.

Some years since, this event is said to have been represented in an extraordinary manner. A young girl was

selected as the personation of the Virgin Mary ; and while Joseph and Anna and others were represented by living persons, she was placed in a bed, and the church darkened, and the midnight mass celebrated, and a child represented as born into the world. As this took place at midnight, it proved, as so indelicate a scene might reasonably be expected to prove, a source of innumerable scandals to religion and morality, and was in consequence abolished. It was for the same reason that the illuminated cross is no longer exhibited at St. Peter's as formerly on Good Friday. The dimness of the church, though 'a dim religious light,' being only enlightened by the cross, was so great throughout the distant parts of the vast edifice, as to prove an occasion for so much vice of every kind, that it was necessary to protect the sacredness of the place from the most frightful sacrilege, by the abolition of the custom. And thus two of the most remarkable scenes of the religious drama have been lately suppressed : one representing the Birth of the Saviour—the other representing the Triumph of His Cross.

But the Nativity was a subject too interesting to be left without some attempt to represent it, or at least, to bring it before the minds of the people. And therefore, a scene is arranged at S. Maria Maggiore, and another at S. Maria in Ara Cœli, in reference to this.

At *S. Maria Maggiore*, they profess to be in possession of the very cradle in which our Lord was laid on his birth. It is ordinarily said, that the child at the moment of his birth, was laid in the manger of the stables where he was born ; and therefore the cradle exhibited at this church, purports to be the manger, or a portion of the manger, in which he was laid. Accordingly it is preserved as one of

the most precious of the relics of Rome, illustrious for the miracles it has wrought in the healing of the sick—the raising of the dead, and the conversion of the infidel and heretic; and is now only produced on the season of the Nativity. Early in the morning, before the day has begun to dawn, it is brought forth from the treasury of the church, and with solemn procession of priests, monks, friars, and ecclesiastics of every grade, preceded by incense—accompanied by singers and guarded by soldiers: it is placed with the utmost reverence and solemnity upon the High Altar. And then there are incensings, and services, and chants, and masses, and prostrations before the cradle; which is left on the High Altar till late in the afternoon of Christmas-day.

When we saw the cradle, the multitude of spectators was immense. It seemed a rude and rough piece of wood, about the size of the lower part of a man's arm; and certainly, if it had any relation to what it professed to be, it was no more than a large splinter or fraction of the original manger. It was enshrined in a glass case with a silver cover, having altogether the shape and appearance of a large glass tureen of about thirty inches in height. Unhappily, however, for the relic, the word usually rendered 'manger' in the gospel history, does not express the place where the food or provender of the cattle is placed: but, rather the stable itself where the cattle are housed. And our Lord at his birth was laid in the stable, and not in any manger as his cradle; and thus all the sacredness of this miraculous relic passes away, like many another fable of ancient times.

At *S. Maria in Ara celi*, the Nativity is represented in another manner, or more correctly speaking, the scene of

the Holy Family soon after the Nativity, as will be described presently.

II.—THE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST.

The next event in the Scripture History, forming a further scene in this religious drama, is the arrival of the wise men from the East. It is simply narrated that certain of the Eastern Magi, or as it stands in our translation, wise men from the East, beheld his star, and following its miraculous guidance, were led to the scene in Bethlehem. They beheld, worshipped, and presented their offerings.

The legend of the church of Rome has largely amplified this simple narrative. It has raised them from the rank of Magi to that of kings; and their number has been settled as three, and their names and countries have all been determined for us. The details of the legend are more amusing than interesting.

In the representation of all this, which is capable of considerable melo-dramatic effect, it was usual for the priests and monks to act the several parts. But when it became necessary for them to withdraw from such occupations, they found a substitute in wooden figures, dressed for the occasion; and at the present day the parties are represented in several figures, of which one is always coloured to represent an African Negro!

In the church of St. Mary of Ara celi, in the Capitol, these scenes are represented in wax figures; and they form a pretty and not inelegant group. It is however at the church of St. Andrea della Valle, that we witnessed it exhibited to considerable advantage. All that extended portion of the church which lay behind the altar was

covered over, and a fine stage erected, considerably above the altar, and stretching away behind it. It was richly and handsomely set off by crimson and yellow hangings, so as to cover the walls completely ; and give the appearance of an interior. Within—above—beside—were lustres brilliantly lighted, and an innumerable galaxy of candles shed their light upon the stage. In the front, seated upon a throne, and elevated by a few steps, was the Virgin Mary, and the child Jesus seated on her knee. She was arrayed, not indeed as we might expect, as the meek and modest maiden of Bethlehem, but with a gorgeous crown upon her head, and with robes of crimson, silk, and purple velvet, trimmed and fringed with a profusion of gold lace. The three kings of wax are present, each accompanied by a page, and all bearing their gifts in their hands ; all are clothed in the richest and most royal robes ; one has a cloak of crimson velvet, a second, one of purple velvet, and the third appears in green velvet, while all exhibit a profusion of gold and silver embroidery. Their regal crowns—for they stand uncovered—are in the hands of their pages.

At night, when all the lustres, chandeliers, and candles are lighted, pouring a blaze of intense light upon the stage ; and when the peals of the organs swell and roll, as it were, through the vast area of the church ; and the shewy dresses and delighted faces of the assembled multitudes, strike the eye of a stranger, the effect of the whole is considerable. Nor is the effect without interest, though totally different in its kind, when seen in those hours of the day, when the sermon is preached by some popular preacher. On one occasion while the assembled congregation awaited the preacher, another priest occupied attention by reading

a homily illustrative of the exhibition on the stage ; and beyond all doubt, it was the most strange of all homilies our ears had ever heard. It narrated all the legend respecting these three kings of the East ; it entered into minute details ; it told word for word all the interesting conversations that passed between them and the Virgin Mary. And more than all, it coolly stated that they were anxious to bear away to their distant kingdoms, some precious memento of the Virgin and child ; and that she was unwilling to refuse, and actually *pressed some of the milk from her breast into their royal hands* : and they, first tasting for themselves the milk on which the child Jesus was nurtured, returned to their own lands with this precious relic !

The sermon which succeeded this homily was little else than a violent invective against the Reformation, drawing a parallel between that event and the schism of Arius, with all its heresies in the early ages of the church ; and making only occasional references to the scenes represented in so lively a manner on the stage.

III.—THE FEAST OF CANDLES, OR THE PURIFICATION.

The feast of candles—the blessing, the distribution and the procession of candles, is avowedly the continuation of a heathen custom. The ‘ Capelle Pontificie ’ thus describes its origin : ‘ This procession has an origin a little less ancient than that of the purification of the Virgin Mary. They used to celebrate at Rome the feast of the Lupercalia in honor of their god Pan, which [heathen] superstition they had received from Evander. The zealous and learned Pontiff, Saint Gelasius I., elected in 492, abolished this

superstitious feast, and in place of the Lupercalia instituted the feast of the Purification, which they celebrated in the East for some time before.' The Romanists in England are usually indignant when it is said, that their ceremonies were originally heathen ceremonies. The Romanists in Italy, on the other hand, claim that origin for them as a proof of the wisdom of a Church, which has converted a heathen people and their heathen customs into a christian people and christian ceremonies.

Their authors, in treating of this ceremony state, that as Christ is the light of the world, so his gospel may most suitably be represented by the light of the candles, and so far the ceremony may be regarded as symbolical. They also state that the procession of the Pope, Cardinals, Bishops, &c., from the sanctuary into the body of the church, carrying their lighted candles, is a suitable representation of the apostles, priests and ministers of the church, going forth into the world to preach the gospel by the displaying the light of the gospel. Accordingly the choir sing the words, "The light to lighten the Gentiles, &c." In this manner they have given a christian name and a christian meaning to the Heathen Lupercalia—to the feast of the god Pan; and it must be admitted that whatever may be thought of the wisdom, there can be but one opinion as to the ingenuity of this appropriation of the custom.

After the church of St. Peter's has been lined on both sides by the military, forming a broad passage between them for the cortege of the Pope, he enters in his gestatoria or chair of state, supported on a litter, and borne on the shoulders of eight men clothed in crimson. He comes attended by the flabelle—huge fans made of ostrich feathers with the eyes of the peacock's tails, precisely similar

to those represented in Egyptian pictures as accompanying the kings of Egypt in their triumphs. He comes also with all the Cardinals, Bishops, Prelates, all the officers of state, with his mitres, crowns, &c., borne before him. After kneeling at the altar, he is conducted to the throne, and all the Cardinals &c., take their places.

The spectacle at this moment was magnificent. The Cardinal-Bishops were robed in their episcopal robes of puce or purple, richly ornamented in gold, and held their white mitres in their hands. The Cardinal-Priests were clad in their priestly costume, their albs of white lace—their cassocks of purple silk, and their sacerdotal chasubles of puce or purple silk, embroidered in rich and heavy foliage of gold. They presented a spectacle which for gorgeous and magnificent display of costume, could not possibly be surpassed. No military parade I have ever witnessed, and no courtly pageant I have ever seen, has ever displayed such a prodigal profusion of gold embroidery. All the brilliant uniforms of the *guardia nobile*—of the diplomatic corps—of the various military and naval officers of the various nations of Europe there present, seemed poor and dull—seemed to grow pale before the heavy masses of gold lace that so profusely embroidered the robes and adorned the persons of the cardinals, thrown out as it was in beautiful relief by the deep purple of the robes themselves.

After the Cardinals had severally approached the throne and renewed their vows of obedience and allegiance, and the usual forms were completed, the ceremony of the blessing, the distribution and procession of candles commenced. Three priests near the altar bore three candles, that in the centre being painted and wreathed in flowers, and they

approached the throne. After the prescribed rite, the Pope blesses the candles, of which a vast supply is placed beside the throne. After incensing them and sprinkling them with holy water, and praying over them, he begins to distribute them. Each Cardinal approaches, receives a candle, kisses the Pope's hand and retires. Each Bishop approaches, receives a candle, kisses the Pope's knee, and retires. Each inferior functionary approaches, receives a candle, kisses the Pope's foot and retires; and when all have been supplied, then as rapidly as possible all the candles are lighted and the procession is formed.

These candles are wax, and of prodigious size. They are ordinarily about five or six inches in circumference, and about four or five feet in length. And the column is formed with the choir at its head, and the Officials, Prelates, Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, Ambassadors, &c., arranged in two and two. The Pope then enters his litter, and borne on the shoulders of his men and surrounded by the Swiss guardsmen, flanked by the singular flabelle and followed by the guard of nobles, joins the column, which then moves forward, passing down along one side of the church, and then returning along the other. It was at this moment a singular spectacle, and striking as it was singular. The column moved slowly on, the incense ascended in perfume, the music filled the temple; two hundred candles were flaming aloft from as many moving brands. The white mitres and gorgeous robes of the Cardinals—the long parade of military uniforms with arms presented—the heavy tread of the guardsmen—the Pope, borne aloft and holding in his left hand a lighted candle wreathed with flowers, and with his right blessing the people, presented altogether such a spectacle in that noble

temple as cannot easily be forgotten. It will be remembered for its richness ;—it will be remembered for its singularity ; but it will never be remembered for its religious tendency. It was called a religious ceremony, representative of the church going forth to enlighten the world by preaching the gospel ; but the very last thought which any part of the ceremony suggested to the mind was one connected with religion.

At the conclusion of the procession all return to their places. The Pope takes his place upon the throne, and a Cardinal celebrates a High Mass, and then the *Te Deum*. The final conclusion must be given in the words of the “ Capelle Pontificie.”

“ Then the Pontiff, saying, ‘ Blessed be the name of the Lord,’ gives the Apostle’s benediction, and the officiating Cardinal reads from the altar the accustomed formula with which they inform those who are present, that an *Indulgence of thirty years* has been conceded to them by the Supreme Pontiff.”

We had now witnessed a singular sight and as singular a contrast. There were ladies veiled and clothed in simple black, while there were cardinals arrayed in gorgeous purple and gold. There were laymen clothed in the most sombre black, while there were priests arrayed in purple and scarlet. There was the sun shining in all the splendour of an Italian sky, while there were 200 gigantic candles adding to its light. And all this to represent the light of the gospel as exhibited by the church. And having witnessed the spectacle, we were farther rewarded by an *Indulgence of thirty years* !

IV.—PALM SUNDAY.

In the ‘Capelle Pontificie,’ the only authorised rubric of the mode in which these high ceremonies are to be conducted, is the following account of the ceremony of the Palms. ‘Before describing the blessing of the Palms, it is necessary to remember that the festival, the blessing and the procession of Palms, was instituted for the solemn entrance of Jesus Christ into the City of Jerusalem, that by the faithful united, it might be not only represented in spirit every year to the christian multitude, but might be also renewed in some other mode. Besides which, the church wished to signify by this solemn ceremony, the glorious entrance into heaven, which the Divine Redeemer will make with the elect after the general judgment.’ This establishes the dramatic character of the ceremony.

We read in the Holy Scriptures, that as our Lord approached Jerusalem, “A very great multitude spread their garments in the way, others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way : and the multitudes that went before and that followed, cried, saying—Hosanna to the Son of David ! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ; Hosanna in the highest.” Matt. xxi. 8. To represent this, the procession of Palms was designed. The Pope, as the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and therefore his most suitable representative, is carried into St Peter’s, not indeed “meek and lowly, riding upon an ass,” but seated in his chair and carried on the shoulders of eight men. He is arrayed in all possible magnificence, preceded by the long line of bishops and cardinals in their robes of splendour, accompanied by all the high officers of state, and surrounded

by the naked swords of his guardsmen. After he descends from the litter, and takes his place upon the throne, and has received the homage of each cardinal, as usual on those state occasions, the ceremonies peculiar to the day commence.

Three priests, each carrying aloft a Palm, descend from the High Altar, and slowly approach the throne. The Pope receives them, reading over them a prescribed form of prayer, sprinkling them with holy water, and thus blessing them. Each Cardinal, archbishop, bishop, prelate, ambassador, &c. &c., then approaches the throne, and on his knees, receives a Palm from the Pope, which he receives with the usual forms, of kissing the hand, or knee, or foot of the Pope, according to his rank, and then retires to his place. When every person is thus supplied, the procession of Palms is formed ; the Pope leaving his throne again, enters his chair on the men's shoulders, and preceded by candles lighted—the choir singing—the incense burning, the whole column in their magnificent and many-coloured robes moved down the aisle by one side of the High Altar, and returned by the other. Borne above all by the height of the litter, His Holiness moved, the conspicuous representation of “the meek and lowly One.” And as the procession moved slowly along, the splendour of the costumes, their brilliant colours, and their gold and silver brocade—the long array of mitres and many branches of Palms moving among them—the strains of sacred music from the choir, mingling with the heavy tramp of the guardsmen—the long and brilliant lines of military extending the whole length of the church, and the procession itself, with the Pope lifted on high above all ; and all this in the most magnificent temple in the world, presented to

the eye a scene of pageantry, most striking and beautiful, but wholly ineffective, because unsuitable, as representing the entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem.

When the procession has ended, and the pope has returned to the throne, and the Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, &c. have retired to their places, the high mass is celebrated, and an indulgence granted to all present, the following being the rubric on this occasion.

‘At the conclusion of the mass, the officiating Cardinal recites the formula of *the indulgence for thirty years*, conceded by the Pope to those present, and thus the ceremony concludes.’

But although this ceremony thus concludes at St. Peter’s, it is followed in the afternoon by another in St. John of Lateran. It is best to describe it in the words of Bishop Baggs, whose account was written to remove certain unfavourable impressions respecting it which existed among the English at Rome. He says :—

‘After a short prayer, the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary enters the Basilica of St. John Lateran, where he is received by four canons. Here, seated at the tribunal of penance, he touches with his rod the heads of the prelates, ministers, and others who approach to him ; and for this act of humiliation, they receive an indulgence or remission of canonical penance of *one hundred days*. He also hears the confessions of any persons, who may choose to present themselves.’

There is thus ample inducement of a spiritual kind, for all who value indulgences, to attend this ceremony of Palms, as representing the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem. There is *an indulgence of thirty years*, for those who attend the morning ceremonies, and *an indulgence of one hundred days*, for those who attend those of the evening.

Before dismissing this ceremony it may be observed, that the Palms are very disappointing. One so naturally expects to see branches of green leaves of a tree almost unknown among us, waving aloft in the columns of the procession, that no one can see the poor reality without some disappointment. They are not branches of the Palm at all ; they are composed of the dried and withered leaves of the tree,—so dried and withered as to appear like the shavings of ordinary timber. These are platted together with knots and bows of the same, looking like sceptres made of shavings of wood, without the most remote resemblance to the green branches of palms, which one might reasonably expect in a ceremony designed to represent the scene on the road to Jerusalem.

V.—THE SUFFERINGS OF OUR LORD.

The week intervening between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday is called the Holy Week ; and as in the sufferings of our Lord, his passion or agony is regarded as distinct from his death, so they are represented in a distinct or separate manner. The office of *Tenebræ* and the *Miserere* are designed for this. These offices, which are conducted three times in the Sistine Chapel, and also three times in St. Peter's, namely on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, are very peculiar.

There are various explanations given at Rome, as to the peculiarities of the *Tenebræ*. A series of candles arranged in a triangular form are placed lighted on the altar, and constitute the only light of the church. And as each psalm is chanted a candle is extinguished, till gradually all the psalms are ended and all the candles extinguished, ex-

cept the last, which, instead of being extinguished, is concealed behind the curtains that on this occasion cover the pictures over the altar. This gradual extinction of the light is said by some to represent the gathering and growing sufferings, that, like a cloud of darkness, fell on our Lord before the final scene of the crucifixion ; and it is explained by others as the gradual quenching of the light of the apostles, who forsook Him and fled, leaving Christ the only light un-extinguished. But however they differ as to the meaning of this portion of the office, they all agree in regarding the deep darkness that follows the concealing of the last light, as intended to represent the darkness—the supernatural darkness, that fell upon the world at the death on the cross. In the “ Capelle Pontificie ;” it is said “ it is designed to signify the wonderful darkness that at the death of the Redeemer covered the whole land, and the sad and obstinate blindness into which the obstinate synagogue was plunged when abandoned by God.”

This singular office used to be always celebrated at night, but the disorders and scandals that took place in those scenes of midnight gatherings created a necessity for the change. It is now celebrated in the afternoon of the day preceding the night on which it was formerly celebrated.

At the conclusion of this portion of the service, and when the darkness is complete by the concealment of the last light, commences the *Miserere*. This is the fifty-first Psalm. And as it is breathed by the choir—the most perfect and practised choir in the world—as it is heard in all the stillness and solemnity of the scene, wrapped in darkness and leaving nothing to distract the eye where all looks dim and shadowy, it has a strange and wonderful effect. It is designed to express as far as music can express, the

deep and mental agonies of the dying Saviour, and certainly there never yet was heard, except among the shepherds of Bethlehem on the night of the nativity, such sounds, so unearthly, and unlike the music of the world. It is plaintive, intensely melancholy, and has a powerful effect under the peculiar circumstances of the scene. The several musical compositions for the Miserere, are the productions of the greatest composers, are stamped by the highest popularity, and all bear a similar character, being unquestionably among the most striking, suitable and effective pieces of music in the world; and they undoubtedly express, as far as musical composition is capable of expressing, the depths of inward and intense grief. If angels could be supposed to sigh and moan in sorrow, they might attune their harps of heaven to such music as is then sung in the Sistine Chapel.

Such is the method in which the sufferings of our Lord—his bodily and mental sufferings, as distinct from his death, are represented in this religious drama. Another method might have been the reading of the narrative of those sufferings as given in the gospels—the reading it in the ears of the people, and in the language of the people. The Church of Rome has preferred the former, the Church of England has chosen the latter.

VI.—THE WASHING OF FEET, AND THE LAST SUPPER.

It is written in the Gospel narrative, that our Lord, on the night before he suffered, sat down with his disciples—partook with them of the feast of the passover; and then gave to them bread and wine, and at the same time instituted the supper of the Lord, that sacrament of the Christian

Church. It is also written that after supper on this occasion our Lord rose from the table, girded himself with a napkin, and pouring water into a basin, proceeded to wash the feet of his disciples. Both these interesting and touching incidents were too dramatic to be omitted in the ceremonies of Rome.

The latter, probably from convenience, is first represented. It is called the 'Lavanda' or washing, and takes place in one of the transepts of St. Peter's, which is well arranged for the spectacle. A platform or stage is erected, of sufficient height to enable everything to be seen by all who may desire to be present. The tapestry woven from the celebrated fresco of Leonardo da Vinci, representing the Last Supper, is suspended above this stage, which is admirably arranged. High above all, and against the wall, is an elevated bench, on which are seated thirteen men, to represent the apostles of our Lord. They are clothed in dresses like white flannel, and wear caps of a conical form, like those worn among the Persians: as they are seated thus, the pope enters, accompanied by the officers of state; one carries a silver-gilt basin of water, a second carries thirteen towels, a third has thirteen bouquets of flowers, and a fourth carries twenty-six medals. The pope approaches the bench of the apostles, which is so high and so well managed, that their knees are on a level with the head of the Pope and his attendants, so that his holiness is spared the necessity of stooping in order to the washing their feet, which immediately commences. A deacon of the church raises the foot of the first apostle, an attendant hands a towel to the pope, he dips it into the silver-gilt basin, he touches the instep raised before him,—he kisses the washed foot, he receives a bouquet of flowers from

another attendant, presents it to the apostle—desires two medals to be presented by his treasurer, and moves to the next. A deacon of the church raises the foot of the next apostle to be washed, and the same ceremony continues till every right foot is raised—every apostle washed and kissed, every bouquet disposed of, and two medals presented to each, on which the ceremony concludes, and his holiness retires.

This was followed by the supper, or as it is usually called the 'Pranzo' or 'Tavola' and was held in a sala above the vestibule of St. Peter's. There is usually some difficulty in securing entrance to this scene in the drama, after witnessing that of the 'Lavanda.'

There was in this sala a large stage or platform erected for the table—for the apostles and for the Pope. The thirteen representatives of the Apostles—sometimes called Pilgrims instead of Apostles—entered by a private door, dressed precisely as they appeared at the washing of the feet, except that each held the bouquet of flowers which the Pope had presented, and each seemed to smell most industriously at his own, as if resolved to extract all the perfume from it. They took their seats all at one side of the table, which was narrow, having their backs to the wall and their faces to the spectators. The table was tastefully laid out, not as we might suppose the humble table of our Lord to be, but loaded with plate and decorated with a profusion of flowers. The Governor of Rome stood at one end, and there were many officials in attendance. At last the Pope entered, asked a blessing, and moved along the side of the table opposite the Apostles, so as to be between them and the spectators, the whole being so elevated as to be easily visible to all. A bishop humbly

approached, acting the part of a servant or waiter, holding a dish of soup, and bending on one knee, presented it to the Pope. The Pope then acting the part of our Lord, handed it across the narrow table to the first apostle : who rose to receive it. Then again and again another and another bishop approached, bent on one knee, presented a dish of soup and retired ; and the Pope disposed of it as before. When in this manner all the apostles were served, there was a second and afterwards a third course, there being a profusion of fish and vegetables and rice, &c. all served by bishops on their knees, presenting each plate to the Pope, and then by the Pope in person presenting each plate to the apostles. All was concluded by a grace, when I retired, fully satisfied with my share of the entertainment.

Among the English who witnessed these ceremonies, the Lavanda and the Tavola, I never heard but one opinion ; it was condemnatory of their folly and frivolity. Whether any weight is to be attached to the opinions of the English, as to ceremonies so totally different from the simplicity of their own Church, is another matter. It is at least certain, that with persons holding every variety of opinion, Churchmen and Dissenters, Tractarians and Evangelicals, there was but one sentiment, as to the utter childishness and absurdity of the whole scene. It appeared to all an absurd mockery of sacred things, without one redeeming point to justify it. There was something worse than mockery in representing the beautiful and simple act of our Lord, in washing the feet of his apostles, by a Pope in all the trappings of silver and gold, with his golden basin and a fresh napkin for each, just touching the foot that had been most carefully washed a few moments before, that he might not be offended : and then following it up by the kissing, and

the nosegays, and the medals. Nor can language be too strong in reprobation of such a representing of the last supper, that solemn and touching scene, by a Pope personating our Lord, with bishops on their knees as waiters, at a table loaded with plate and flowers, and all the "poms and vanities" of the world. As a scene of mockery it was sufficiently sad, and yet the sadness was utterly banished in the merriment occasioned by these dramatic apostles; they sat themselves to it as if it was the first supper they had ever eaten, and the last they were ever to eat. There was a voraciousness of manner, a perfect demolition of everything, to the very cleaning of their plates, that drew bursts of merriment from every part of the assembly. A good man would find it difficult to say whether laughter at the absurdity, or grief at the mockery, of the whole scene, was the most natural effect produced.

There is one point that strikes the mind of every one, as unaccountable and strange. The number of apostles both at the washing and at the supper, is not twelve, but *thirteen*! Perhaps the strangest thing is, that no man is able to give any satisfactory solution of this. One writer suggests, that the thirteenth person represents St. Paul: this is rejected, because St. Paul was not converted for many years afterwards, and so could not have been at the Last Supper. Another suggests, that the person represented was St. Matthias; this is also rejected, because Matthias was not then an Apostle, and was not chosen till after the death and ascension of our Lord. One authority supposes the person represented to be the Virgin Mary, or Mary Magdalene; but this too is rejected, as it is clear that they were not present at the Last Supper, and at all events would not be represented by a man. Another authority supposes the

thirteenth to represent an angel, who is said to have miraculously appeared to Pope Gregory, when once sitting at table with twelve pilgrims. These various hypotheses are maintained or confuted by the learned theologians of Rome, and all their learning seems as yet expended in vain. Anciently, it is said, these persons received the names of the several Apostles: one being called Peter, another Andrew, and so on, till on one occasion a fit of merriment or curiosity seized the spectators; and they asked rather vociferously for the representative of Judas:—‘Which is Judas?’ rung through the gallery—and ‘Which is Judas?’ was echoed back again and again, till prudence suggested that no names should again be given, as the poor representative of Judas was the butt for all the jests and merriment of the public. It ceased, and the number is thirteen. In the ‘*Dizionario-Historico*,’ the difficulty is thus treated:—‘The learned Sarnelli, resolving the mystery of such a number, recognizes in the thirteenth person the Magdalen. The Monsignor Arese, Bishop of Tortona, perceives St. Paul in this person; not as being at the Supper—having been called to the Apostleship after the ascension,—but on account of the particular veneration of the Roman Church towards him. Such an opinion is opposed by Frescobaldi; he supposes that the thirteenth person represents the Master of the House, where the supper was; maintaining that Jesus Christ washed his feet: But this is rejected by Orlendo. Finally, some take it for St. Matthias, the successor to Judas Iscariot: and others take it for the angel whom Pope Gregory saw when he fed twelve poor men at his table, sitting among them, &c. Such is the account given by the Pope’s Assistant Chamberlain: and the Romish bishop Baggs passes the

following judgment :—‘ The most probable account, we think, is that the thirteenth apostle was added in memory of the angel who is believed to have appeared among the twelve poor guests of Saint Gregory the Great, while he was exercising united charity and humility.’ On such trifling the Roman theologians expend their learning, and with such trifling the Roman people are amused.

VII.—THE JUDGMENT-HALL OF PILATE.

But besides those great and leading features of the history of revelation, there are others of a less important kind which are not altogether omitted ; such as the scene when our Lord was brought before Pontius Pilate in his judgment-hall. The manner in which the Gospel narrative of this scene is read on those occasions, is a remarkable illustration of the theatrical character of these ceremonies. It seems to shew that the object of their arrangement was to teach the people the facts of the gospel narrative as much as possible by representation.

The gospel appointed for Palm-Sunday—for Good-Friday, for Easter-day, is read, not as on ordinary occasions by a priest in the usual place. It is appointed to be read by THREE PRIESTS, who personate the different parties described in the narrative of the gospel as taking part in the events narrated. One of them personates the Evangelist who wrote the gospel, and his part is to read the narrative as detailed. A second personates Pontius Pilate, the maid at the door, the priests, the Pharisees, &c., and his part is to read those sentences which were spoken by them. The third personates our Lord Jesus Christ, and his part is to read those words that were uttered by him on the occasion

narrated. In order to give the greater effect to the whole, the choir is appointed to undertake those parts which were the words of the multitude ; and thus on the whole a singular effect, one which seems to be striking to some persons, is produced. The different voices of the priests, reading or intoning their different parts, Pilate speaking in one voice, Christ speaking in another, while the choir, breaking forth, fill the whole of the vast church with the shout, " Crucify him, crucify him ! " and again with the cry, " Not this man, but Barabbas ! " and then the first priest resumes the narrative.

Accustomed as we are to look on the Holy Scriptures with great reverence, and to read the narrative of our Lord's sufferings with a profound feeling of awe, it has something repulsive to our tastes if not to our judgments, to find a theatrical character given to so holy an exercise. We are perhaps scarcely capable of judging without prejudice on such a practice as that described ; but I may say that though some persons regarded it at the time as having an unusual and striking and not unpleasant effect, yet on my own mind the effect produced was very far from pleasing or satisfactory. Perhaps my love of simplicity may have warped my judgment too much upon this point.

VIII.—THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD.

I was early at the Sistine Chapel in order to witness the first part of these ceremonies. The Pope and Cardinals and a long train of officials attended, and the whole court were present in state. Cardinal after Cardinal entered—knelt to the altar—had his robes arranged by his chamberlain—bowed to the other Cardinals—and took his seat,

with his chamberlain or gentlemen seated in purple at his feet. The Pope entered, surrounded by the guard of nobles with their swords drawn, and took his seat on the throne. Then cardinal after cardinal approached the foot of the throne and renewed his vows of obedience and allegiance—kissing the hand of his holiness, and retiring resumed his seat.

The death of our Lord was represented in a High Mass celebrated by a cardinal. The term ‘represented’ is inadequate, as according to the doctrine of the church of Rome, the mass is not a representing, but a realizing—a true and proper and literal realizing of the sacrifice or death of Christ. But on the present occasion the *burial of the body* was to be realized as well as the *death of our Lord*. And therefore on the model of the Levitical law of the two birds, there are consecrated at this high or Pontifical mass of the Thursday—Two Hosts. One is designed to be the Saviour as he was broken on the cross, crucified to death, and was therefore broken and eaten, as usual, by the officiating cardinal; this being held necessary in order to its being truly a sacrifice. The second was designed as the Saviour, dead, taken down from the cross and buried in the sepulchre.

Accordingly this second Host was the subject of the coming ceremony. As the dead body of our Lord, it was to be buried. It was to be taken down from the cross as by Joseph of Arimathea—borne by sorrowing disciples—followed by the weeping women, and laid in the tomb in the shadows of night. To represent this, the host is carried by the Pope under a baldachino or canopy supported by six officials, and accompanied by all the Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Prelates, &c., &c. The choir takes

precedence, singing. The incense fills all with its volumes of perfume. The guards march in company, and the whole procession moving out from the Sistine chapel pass along between lines of soldiers and enter the Pauline chapel. This chapel is prepared as 'the sepulchre,' and as the procession approached and the doors flew open, a flood of light streaming from nearly four hundred torches and candles concentrated about the altar, burst with intense and dazzling brightness on our eyes. It was exceedingly brilliant as a spectacle, but alas ! it in no degree reminded us of the sepulchre of our Lord, with all its hallowing and touching associations. The pomp and display of military parade consorted ill with the grave of the meek and lowly One. The splendid robes, the scarlet and the purple and the gold were unlike to a scene where secret friends and timid disciples laid the Body by stealth. It was not easy to imagine the weeping sorrowing women at the grave of Jesus in the gorgeously appavelled officials of a court, and still less easy to imagine the solitude and silence of the tomb of the garden, in the din and hum of the multitude, in the tramp of the military, in the clashing of their arms, in the pageant of Pope and Cardinals, and in the swelling strains of the choir. Yet here on the altar of the Pauline chapel the host was placed to represent the buried Saviour ! And then all retired.

All this is accomplished on Thursday, which was the day before he really suffered ; and his resurrection is represented on Friday—the day on which he actually died. All this, though curious, seems to have arisen from convenience, or perhaps from a desire to represent the events before the days on which the events are commemorated, as if to prepare the minds of the people for them.

On Friday the Pope, Cardinals, &c., assembled in the Sistine chapel, as on the preceding day. After that most wonderful and fearful of all the ceremonies, the adoration of the cross, which shall be detailed elsewhere—the representation of THE RESURRECTION commences. The Pope, Cardinals, &c., leave the Sistine chapel. and proceed to the Pauline chapel. In that chapel, as the Sepulchre, He was buried on the preceding day. A similar procession was marshalled, and the music and the incense—the choir, the officials, the priests, the prelates, the bishops, the cardinals, all moved in their appointed order, followed by train-bearers, and flanked by the guards with swords drawn. They enter the Pauline chapel; and though when Peter and John came to the sepulchre, as we read in the gospel narrative, “they found not the body of Jesus,” for he was risen from the dead; yet, when the supposed successor of Peter, with his train of companions, came to this sepulchre, they found the Host—the body of our Lord, precisely as they left it yesterday. And then the Resurrection—that greatest of miracles, by which death has been vanquished, and the bars of the grave broken—is represented. It is not that the consecrated Wafer or Host, in its nature as the “Body of Jesus,” moved of itself. It is not that the Holy Spirit descended and raised it. It is not that an angel rolled away the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre. It is not that the Host arose and frightened the guardsmen, who had kept watch during the night. But, it was, that the Host found itself in the fingers of the Sacristan-Bishop; and, after being incensed three times by the Pope, it found itself transferred to the fingers of the officiating Cardinal: and then by a further change, it found itself in the hand of the Pope. He immediately drew the veil, or cloth that

was about his neck, and spread the end of it over 'the body.' The soldiers, either in adoration or in representation of fear, did not 'become as dead men,' but fell upon their knees, while the procession was again marshalled, and choir and officials, priests and bishops, patriarchs and cardinals, moved on from the sepulchre. The Pope followed under a canopy, to cover the risen Lord, and thus flanked by guards, proceeded singing; accompanied by lighted candles, the procession passed from the Pauline, and entered the Sistine chapel, where the Pope transferred 'the risen Saviour' to the hands of the officiating cardinal, and he again transferred him to the altar, where the Pope again taking the censer, incensed him three times, and thus accomplished—THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS!

This is followed by what is called THE MASS OF THE PRE-SANCTIFIED—a mass different in its form and nature from any other mass in the Church of Rome. It is peculiar to Good Friday, as well as peculiar to the Sistine chapel. And in no other part of the Roman Church, and on no other occasion in the year, is it celebrated.

The grand peculiarity of this mass, is, that there is *no consecration* either of Bread or of Wine. Instead of consecrating a wafer or host, they substitute the one they had just brought from the Pauline chapel. They had just 'raised up Jesus from the dead,' and now proceed to offer him again. Instead of consecrating wine, they use it unconsecrated on this occasion. So alien is this from all the doctrines usually taught in the Church of Rome, and so opposed is it to all the doctrinal views of the Council of Trent, that many of the Roman Divines pronounce it to be no mass at all, as being without the essentials of a true mass; while others regard it as merely 'a dry mass,'

Messa sicca, from there being no consecrated wine. The Cardinal-Priest breaks the Host, and placing a portion in a cup of unconsecrated wine, receives it in precisely the same way as if it was consecrated in the usual manner.

IX.—THE FORGIVENESS AND BLESSING.

As the sufferings, the death and resurrection of our Lord were represented, so another scene is acted in order to represent the Forgiveness and the Blessings that have been derived to us from these. The forgiveness was dramatised in one scene, and the Blessing in another. And first for the Forgiveness.

In the afternoon of the Thursday, after the death of Christ had been represented, and while his sorrows were in process of being represented in the *Miserere*, the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary entered St. Peter's. The greater portion of the English were in the Sistine, or in the choir chapel of St. Peter's, listening to the *Miserere* at that moment. The Cardinal entered and took his seat upon a tribunal erected for him in one of the transepts. He held a long rod in his hand: he held it as if it were a fishing-rod, and he in the act of angling, so that he looked a very impersonation of "a fisher of men." He there sat to hear confessions in public—the public confessions of all who preferred publicity to privacy on such occasions, and to give absolution in certain reserved cases; and especially to represent the forgiveness secured by the sufferings and death of Christ.

The numbers that come forward to partake of the forgiveness can scarcely be conceived. They came before him arranged by an official in sets of three or four at a time.

They knelt at a short distance from him. They moved their lips as saying something which neither the Cardinal, nor any one else, could hear. I drew so near as to be touching them, so as to hear the confession if possible ; so near indeed, as to be in a far better position for hearing them than the Cardinal himself ; but I found that no confession was uttered, and that if uttered, neither the Grand Penitentiary nor any one else could hear it ! He immediately touched each head with the top of his rod, thus conferring the Forgiveness without his having the trouble of speaking it, or they the delay of hearing it. They instantly rose forgiven and departed laughing. They were succeeded on the instant by three or four more. The instant they kneeled, the rod touched each head, and they too arose forgiven and departed laughing. These were succeeded again and again, till many hundreds were confessed without being heard—without having time to confess, and were absolved with a rapidity that was as amusing as it was astonishing. There sat the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary, apparently without one thought on his mind, reclining comfortably on his throne ; and as fast as he could move his wrist and wield his rod, so as to touch every head in succession, he dispatched a sinner absolved for ever. A confession which no one could hear, and an absolution so easy to be obtained from so high a functionary, was the thing precisely to suit the Roman people. They pressed forward with great eagerness, so that at least five hundred persons were disposed of in an hour : though the merriment it seemed to create among them, gave an air of exceeding irreverence to the whole scene. And yet all this was a drama representing the forgiveness of sins secured to us by the sorrows, sufferings, and death of Christ !

If the term might be used without irreverence to religion, and unnecessary pain to those who view such ceremonies in a different light, the whole scene might be regarded as a farce designed to dissipate the solemn reflections connected with the season. The few English who were present, were at first amused, and laughed immoderately. To them the Cardinal appeared as if he were fishing, only that his rod rose and fell on the heads of human beings. But when this first effect had passed away, it was as a shock—a violent shock to every religious feeling, to witness thus a childish mockery of the most hallowed subject that can affect the heart or the mind of man.

And now for the Blessing. This part of the ceremonial is performed by the Pope himself. Over the entrance to St. Peter's is a large sala, where the 'Tavola' was prepared. The central window of this sala is over the great gates of St. Peter's, and has a large balcony attached to it, from which the eye has a view of the whole piazza beneath. I obtained admission to this balcony a few minutes before the arrival of the Pope, and the view was magnificent. The noble piazza, with its long colonnades and its gushing fountains—the brilliant uniforms of the several regiments of both Cavalry and Infantry paraded below—the number of equipages arranged beyond them—the masses of the Roman people assembled on the steps and approaches—the numbers of English, French, Russian and other foreigners, gaily dressed, on the top of the colonnades—all presented a most magnificent *coup d'œil*. But I was obliged rapidly to withdraw, as his Holiness approached.

The window and balcony were all hung with crimson. The head of the procession approached. Bishop after Bishop, Cardinal after Cardinal, Official after Official arrived, and

there was an assemblage of splendid robes and glittering mitres compressed into the balcony. At last the Pope appears in his chair on its litter, borne on the shoulders of his men, and covered by a canopy borne by eight prelates. He rose and seemed to stand on the heads of Cardinals and Bishops, with the two gigantic fans—the flabelle, on either side. In this position he confers the benediction.

“May the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, whose power and authority is confided to us, themselves intercede with the Lord for us. Amen.

“By the prayers and merits of the blessed Mary ever a Virgin, of the blessed Michael the Archangel, of the Blessed John the Baptist, of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the Saints, may the Almighty God have mercy upon you, and all your sins being pardoned, may Jesus Christ conduct you to eternal life. Amen.

“May the Almighty and merciful God grant you the indulgence, absolution and remission of all your sins, a place of true and fruitful repentance, a heart ever penitent, and amendment of life, grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit, and final perseverance in good works. Amen.

“And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be with you and remain with you for ever. Amen.”

At the conclusion of the blessing an indulgence is issued. This is best stated in the words of the ‘Capelle Pontificie.’

“Afterwards the Plenary Indulgence is to be published, both in Latin and Italian, by the two assistant Cardinal-Deacons.”

The two copies thus read are then flung from the balcony into the piazza, such being the usual mode or form of publication on these occasions.

This ceremony, which takes place on Thursday, but, with a larger concourse of persons, also on Easter-day, is striking, impressive and imposing. The large masses of the people all uncovered in the open piazza has a solemn effect, and the peculiar manner in which the blessing is given, a part with arms across, a part with one hand lifted, and a part with both arms flung wide to their utmost, giving the Pope in his loose robes the appearance of a cross, has a very fine effect, as indeed it was evidently arranged for effect. At the same time it is all ‘dumb show.’ It is as if, at St. Paul’s in London, the houses on both sides of Ludgate Hill were removed and their place occupied by masses of people extending to Fleet Street, and surrounded by military—as if the Archbishop of Canterbury accompanied by all the bishops and the court appeared over the entrance of St. Paul’s and there pronounced the blessing—it would thus give some resemblance of the scene, especially of the distance between the Pope who blesses, and the people who are blessed.

X.—THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

In order to perfect the series of events connected with the foundation of the Christian Church, it seemed desirable to have some representation of the conversion of the Jews, as well as of the ingathering of the Gentiles ; and as the latter is elsewhere described, it only remains to notice the former here.

This scene of the drama is in the baptistery of *S. Giovanni Laterano*, and takes place early in the morning of Saturday. It is preceded by the solemn blessing and consecration of the font of water, which is performed by the

Cardinal-Vicar with much form. The Paschal candle is immersed in it. Sacred oil is poured into it. The Cardinal breathes on it, moving his head so as to form a cross with his breath on the water; and the form of conjuration is observed, by which the foul and evil spirit is supposed to be expelled from it, so as to make this water a suitable emblem of the holiness that becomes all who are admitted into the bosom of the Church of Christ. The whole of this ceremony appeared to me to be surpassingly superstitious.

But my object was to witness the representation of the conversion of the Jewish Church; and this was acted by the production of two persons, a young man and a young woman, who were said to be Jews, and who having been duly instructed in the faith of Christ, were now candidates for admission into the Church of Christ through the rite of baptism. It is often said that it is the same Jews, that are converted and baptized every succeeding year, in order to carry on this scene of representation. But this is probably, indeed more than probably, without any real foundation; and certainly the two persons, who were received into the Church in my presence, seemed too respectable, and demeaned themselves too well and too suitably to the occasion to be regarded as playing an insincere part in the scene. They approached the font, and after a few questions from the Cardinal, which they answered according to the required form, they stooped their heads over the font, and the Cardinal, raising the water in a shell, poured it on their heads—then anointed them with oil—offered a few short prayers—performed a few more ceremonies, and the service was concluded.

I have heard it said that on some years, there are several

converts baptized from Judaism ; but that they always take care to have some ready in order to the due exhibition of this part of the scenic representations of the History of Religion.

XI.—THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The narrative of the Holy Scriptures, detailing the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is one of the most remarkable in the sacred volume ; and when taken in connection with the miraculous power of speaking in languages unknown before, then imparted to the Christians, it seems one of the most difficult of all events to represent in a dramatic way ; and yet it was too striking and important not to be attempted. It must be acknowledged by all who have witnessed it, that when viewed apart from all idea of dramatising the event, it is one of the most pleasing and interesting exhibitions of a religious kind in the city of Rome.

Early in the morning of the Epiphany, in the Chapel of the Propaganda, there are series of masses performed by Patriarchs, bishops and priests, in the various languages, and according to the various rites of their different churches. The Greek—the Armenian—the Syrian—the Coptic—the Maronite—the Nestorian and several others were successively celebrated, all and each differing one from another both in language and in form. I had also an opportunity of observing closely the Greek forms at the Greek Church ; and the Armenian forms at the Armenian Church. The former being striking for its display of pomp, and the latter being remarkable for its strangeness and singularity. But at the Propaganda, and at S. Andrea della Valle, I was

enabled to examine the forms of six or seven of the Eastern Churches in communion with Rome—these masses being so celebrated in the different languages to represent the miraculous gift of tongues, and its effect in the conversion of the Gentile nations, and therefore being connected with the appropriate season of the Epiphany.

In the afternoon of the same day, and in the theatre of the Propaganda, the same events are represented in a manner totally different, but in no degree less pleasing. The pupils of the college, the destined missionaries of Rome for the Propagation of the Faith, are there assembled and required to speak in the various languages of the world. A large number of them are youths, natives of many distant regions of the Heathen world, who have been studying in the college to fit them for their missionary labours; and now are required to exhibit the exercise of their various languages. A short stanza—verse or sentence, was spoken by each representative of each nation, so short that, although fifty languages were spoken, yet the whole exhibition occupied no more than two hours. I add a list of the languages, which gives the number as fifty-nine, only fifty of which however were spoken.

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ebraico letterale. | Arabo. |
| Samaritano. | Kurdo. |
| Etiopico. | Persiano. |
| Caldeo letterale. | Indostano. |
| Siriaco. | Turco. |
| Sabeo. | Maltese. |
| Copto. | Georgiano. |
| Greco letterale. | Norvegiano. |
| Armeno letterale. | Cinese letterale (dialogo). |
| Ode Saffica Latina. | Esametri Latini. |

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Sanscrito. | Tedesco letterale. |
| Concanico. | Svizzero. |
| Singalese. | Lingua della Rezia. |
| Amarico. | Olandese. |
| Angolano. | Danese. |
| Caldeo Volgare. | Inglese. |
| Ebraico Rabbinico. | Scozzese. |
| Armino Odierno. | Celtico. |
| Greco Odierno. | Irlandese. |
| Onetto Italiano. | Chilese. |
| Svedese. | Spagnuolo. |
| Pegvano (dialogo). | Portoghese. |
| Inno Italiano. | Catalano. |
| Illirico. | Francese. |
| Albanese. | Terzine. |
| Polacco. | Siciliano. |
| Sloveno. | Nizzardo. |
| Bulgaro. | Epegramma Latino. |
| Tedesco Antico. | Cinese Odierno (dialogo). |

Lingua Originaria della Nuova Olanda.

Many of these languages or dialects are different only in name, as the Scotch, the Celtic, and Irish—and several are only different dialects or provincialisms of Italian; but on the whole it was a highly interesting exhibition, and shows the profound wisdom, at least of this world, that guides the councils of the Propaganda. And well and worthy of all imitation on the part of the Church of England, is a noble establishment like this for the effective training of her own children—the children of her own soil, together with the native youths of other and of heathen lands, so as to fit them, as far as man can fit them, under the blessing

of the Most High, for the lofty destiny of evangelizing the world.

This celebrated institution was first founded in 1622, and is the most effective of all the institutions connected with the church of Rome. It is at present mainly under the influence of the order of the Jesuits.

But, laying aside the institution, it may be seen how the church of Rome endeavours not so much to symbolize as to dramatize the events of the gospel history, and thus in the absence of the Holy Scriptures, endeavours to justify her prohibition of the sacred volume—that true and divinely-appointed means of instruction, by such dramatic representations of the descent of the Holy Ghost for the gift of tongues, and the preaching of the gospel to the world.

XII.—THE GATHERING OF THE GENTILES.

It is predicted in the prophets that all nations shall come to the Messiah—that they shall gather to him like a flowing stream—that they shall flock to him as doves to the windows, and that then he shall be sought and followed by a people out of every nation and language. And this too must form a scene in the religious drama of Rome.

It was acted at St. Peter's. On Holy Thursday the office of the Tenebræ had concluded. Light after light had been extinguished. Darkness was spread throughout the choir-chapel. The plaintive wailing of the beautiful *Miserere* was breathing in our ears. In the midst of it a procession entered St. Peter's. Drums were beating, soldiers were marching, and torches were blazing at its head. It was THE PROCESSION OF THE PILGRIMS. The

soldiers were a guard of honour, and as the long column of pilgrims traversed the church, with their rough music and heavy tramp, they sadly disturbed the more gentle strains of the Miserere. These pilgrims are supposed by a figure, allowable in such a drama, to be the representatives of the devout of distant lands and other climes, who have travelled with scallop-shell and pilgrim-staff to worship, amidst the privileges of the Holy Week, at the sacred shrine of St. Peter and St. Paul. They are supposed however by those who are not much given to figures of rhetoric, to be the idlers, and the beggars, and the tramps of the Campagna and the mountain districts, a few miles from Rome, who flock into the city so full of strangers at that period. The male pilgrims of the procession at St. Peter's were about seventy in number; all had large and comfortable coats or cloaks; some who loved to take care of themselves, had pellerines of oiled cloth, like a London policeman; some carried scarlet umbrellas of huge proportions, some, in all the coxcombrity of pilgrimage, had scallop-shells on shoulders and breasts, and some had neatly fringed their pellerines with smaller scallops, while almost all carried cudgels of no ordinary size, in the character of a pilgrim's staff, though some indeed were of a different character, and were topped with a crucifix. They were accompanied by a respectable-looking man, who, dressed in a waggoner's dress, served to marshal the procession. These were followed by the female pilgrims, to the number of about sixty. Of these I recognised many as the beggars who for several months before had infested the Piazza de Spagna, and who had assailed us an hundred times. They marched through St. Peter's two and two, with a decent-looking woman between them; these seemed

to look around and say with a smirk of satisfaction—that they were truly humble and truly Christian, and truly meritorious, thus to walk between two dirty pilgrims! This at least was the appearance as the long procession moved through the whole length of the church, flanked by lighted candles, till winding down the transept they passed into the side aisle, and were there marshalled so as to kneel before an altar, blazing with several hundred candles. There they knelt for a short time, and the whole vision vanished as rapidly as it appeared, like the scene in a magic lantern, procession, pilgrims, and candles, passing on and vanishing away.

The washing of the feet of the Pilgrims, giving them a supper and putting them to bed, is one of the strangest sights of Rome. The ceremony takes place in a convent called *Trinita de' Pellegrini*, on the evenings of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. It represents the welcome of the Church to those who seek her blessedness.

I have already described the procession of Pilgrims at St. Peter's. Some individuals among them *may* have been pilgrims indeed, *may* have travelled from far-off climes, *may* have vowed a pilgrimage to the Holy City, *may* have sighed and suffered much to perform the vow; but some of them were personally known to myself for months before, as among the very dirtiest and most impudent beggars that infested the streets of Rome. They were walking receptacles of every unclean thing; one of the plagues of Egypt realized again in Rome. These Pilgrims are collected into the convent, the males being placed in one apartment and the females in another.

I went like many others to see them, and, according to a very proper arrangement, was admitted only into the

apartment of the males. They were seated on benches against the walls, around the whole room; and at the distance of about a yard before them, was a hand-rail to prevent pressure from the spectators, and to ensure sufficient space for the operation of washing. They then bared their feet and legs, and presented a spectacle of dirt and filth that could be seen only in Italy. It seemed as if there was merit in dirt, and that for the preceding twelve-month they had foreborne to wash, that there might be an accumulation of merit, in the accumulation of filth. It was the most extravagant display of all that was offensive even to the bodily senses, though the sight seemed a source of pride, which they shewed by their laughter, when their feet and legs, on being bared, seemed more offensive than others.

A Cardinal appeared, covered in a red calico dress, not unlike, except in colour, the frock of an English waggoner. He was accompanied by forty or fifty men, all similarly dressed in red calico frocks; these carried tubs of hot water, placing them within the rails at the feet of the Pilgrims. These men seemed of a very inferior rank in life, very much like the school-masters, clerks, and sextons of little country parishes in England. This was their appearance and manner and language, and there was nothing to justify the notion so prevalent, that these persons are the princes and nobles of Rome. They were plain humble men, who were no strangers to such work as that before them; they placed the feet of the Pilgrims in the warm water, and commenced the augean labour of washing. Widely different indeed was this from the work of the Pope in the morning. His apostles appeared with feet as clean and smooth as ivory, one attendant held a golden

basin of water, another gave him a fresh snowy napkin for every foot, he just touched the instep with the napkin and all was finished ; but in this affair now before us the washing was no mere formality—no nominal thing, no make-believe, but a real honest, bonâ fide washing of the dirtiest and filthiest feet and legs I had ever witnessed. It was indeed a labour. There was soaping—there was scrubbing—there was scraping—there was wiping, while the steam from the warm water, rendered redolent by the feet that were bathed in it, ascended into the nostrils of the washers, as they were obliged on their knees to stoop, with their noses inhaling all the horrible vapour. It is said, that all this is undergone by some as a penance for sin ;—I cannot imagine a more disgusting penance. It is said to be undergone by others as a supply of merit ;—I cannot but think it would make them offensive instead of meritorious in the eyes of many. It was a horrid scene, a scene of filth and stench that was loathsome and revolting.

The Cardinal, at the conclusion of the washing, followed by all present, entered another apartment. There long tables were arranged at which the Pilgrims were to sup. Above were other apartments with comfortable beds, prepared for them to repose. I waited to see them sit down to table, and sick of the whole scene I withdrew. I found that my wife was no less sick of a similar scene of washing in the apartment of female pilgrims, which was superintended by the Princess Rospigliosi. The Queen Dowager of Naples was present. It was now late at night and we gladly returned home.

XIII.—THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST, AND TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.

The last act in this drama of religion, has reference to the exaltation of Christ and the triumph of his Church. The first is represented by the *Quarante ore*, and the latter by the *Coronation of the Virgin*.

The *Quarante ore* is the exaltation of Christ in glory, and is represented by the exaltation of the consecrated Host under peculiar and striking circumstances. As a scene or spectacle it is one of the most beautiful at Rome, as performed at the Pauline chapel. The Pope and Cardinals and all the court attend at the Sistine chapel. At the High or Pontifical mass, two hosts are consecrated as on Holy Thursday—one being eaten by the officiating Cardinal, the other being carried in procession by the Pope into the Pauline chapel. And there all was arranged for its reception. High above the altar—midway between the altar and the roof, a framework was erected in which the host was placed, while three hundred and ninety torches and candles were so arranged as that they formed a sort of glory or flood of intense light around it. For the *quarante ore*, that is, for forty hours, it was left there, the chapel being open day and night to all persons to come and worship the exalted Saviour. And as the grand scala of the Vatican is well-lighted in the evening, and the disposition of lights, setting off the noble architecture of the place, produces a very fine effect, it was one of the favorite sights of Rome. The same ceremony takes its course through all the churches of the city throughout the year.

I was impressed with the deep devotion and reverence of

some few persons in worshipping the host on this occasion. It appeared that there was one seeming advantage in their belief of Transubstantiation. It was this. Their minds did not seem lost in space, looking for a God who filleth all in all ; and is here and every where invisible, but they fixed their gaze in deep and intense and reverential devotion on the host, as if it were the concentration—the visible concentration of Godhead. And this seemed to fix their devotion, so that the eye never stirred, but remained in fixed and untiring gaze upon the one bright spot—the God whom they worshipped.

But while the *quarante ore*, or exaltation of the host shews the exaltation of Christ, the method in which the triumph of the church is dramatized is widely different.

It is a favourite idea at Rome to represent the Virgin Mary as the symbol of the Holy Church, and by means of this idea, those who are prone to her worship, have succeeded in advancing it to a considerable extent of late years—far more than formerly. Among other instances of this is *the Coronation of the Virgin*, a ceremony that far surpasses the worst imaginings and the most extreme anticipation of English Protestants. We witnessed it in a small church in the Corso, the name of which has escaped recollection.

It is universally taught and believed at Rome, that after the death and burial of the Virgin Mary, she rose from the dead, miraculously, after the example of our Lord, and that afterwards she ascended into heaven after the same example. This fiction of the Resurrection and Ascension, or, as they call it, Assumption of Mary, is universally taught and believed at Rome. It is followed up by another fiction still, if possible, more baseless. It is taught and believed

that after her ascension she was placed upon the throne of heaven, between God the Father and God the Son, and that they then and there placed a diadem upon her head, and crowned her Queen of heaven, Queen of Angels, and Queen of Saints! This strange fiction is represented in statuary, in painting, in carving, and in every possible way. Some of the ablest artists have exhibited all their powers, and some of the most exquisite triumphs of art have reference to this subject.

Of all the portraitures of female loveliness seen in the innumerable Madonnas, in the pictures of the Virgin Mary throughout Italy, that which pleased me most, as representing the ideal of gentleness, meekness, purity, innocence, is a small fresco, by Fra Beato Angelico, in the convent of St. Mark, at Florence. It is in a very small confined closet. It represents the Virgin clothed in white, and the Lord Jesus Christ placing the crown of heaven upon her head, while she bends to receive it. The artist was a monk, and probably a holy monk for his times: but he had notwithstanding the most exquisite conception and feeling of female loveliness.

This subject—*the Coronation of the Virgin*—is not only represented in statuary, and carving, and in painting, and fresco, but it is also represented in a dramatic way. An image of the Virgin is selected. It is arrayed in velvet or satin, according to the taste of the priests. It is adorned with silver and gold, and trimmed with the most costly lace. Necklaces and ear-rings and bracelets of precious stones glitter on the graven image. It is enthroned at the appointed time on the altar, amidst the blaze of several hundred candles. The whole church is handsomely hung with tapestry, and brilliantly lighted for the occasion, while

the blaze of light flashing around the image is dazzling and overpowering. I have reckoned above three hundred candles tastefully grouped around it, and pouring such an intense flood of light upon the one object as to be perfectly overpowering. On these occasions, the crowds of spectators—for it is not easy to call them worshippers—is immense. There is a service performed; there is much music; and the priests approach the image and crown it.

In the progress of these ceremonies and services, every thing is done that could be done, if deliberate idolatry or image-worship were intended. There is the dressing or decking it; there is the burning incense to it; there is the lighting of candles to it; there is bowing and kneeling before it; there is the utterance of prayer before it; there is the crowning it—everything, in short, that could be done, if the special object was the religious worship or adoration of the image itself; as if the ancient heathens of Rome were again worshipping and adoring one of the ancient images of their heathen goddesses. And to crown all, the ceremony is officially called, in the appointed service for the occasion, *THE CORONATION OF IMAGES*.

It must not be said, that this is a custom unauthorized by the church, and sanctioned only by ignorant, or superstitious, or designing Priests. It is not only authorized by the church, but it has a liturgical service authorized for the occasion, and it is a ceremony in which the Popes themselves are often the officiating parties. The present Pope Gregory XVI. officiated at the coronation of the picture in the church of S. Maria Maggiore, and the details are published by his chamberlain and with his sanction and patronage.

The following is an extract from the ‘*Dizionario di erudizione storica-ecclesiastica*’ by Moroni, 1842.

“The coronation of sacred images—

“It was anciently the practice to crown the sacred images of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and her divine child, as is also very ancient the pious practice of consecrating and offering a crown of gold and of silver, and also of gems in the churches. Of this, many examples may be read in the article on ‘The Church of Rome.’ They were accustomed to crown with a crown of gold and silver, those images of the saints, male or female, (*santo o santa*) which were held in special veneration. Ordinarily however the coronation of the sacred images was done with solemnity; as that of the blessed Virgin and her Son Jesus, by the Supreme Pontiff, and by the Chapter of St. Peter’s in the Vatican. We shall treat first of the coronation by the Popes, and then of that by the Canons of the Vatican. *We ought not to be silent however as to the fact that the ancients were accustomed to crown the images of their Gods.*

“Clement VIII. gave a crown of gems to the miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which they venerate in the church and patriarchal Basilica of S. Mary the greater, (*Maria Maggiore*) that is, in the sumptuous chapel Borg-hese. But the crown with which Clement VIII. crowned the fore-mentioned image, and also the crowns with which it was afterwards crowned by other Popes, have been lost through the wickedness of the times, and since then two crowns of silver adorn her image and that of her divine child.

“The present Pope Gregory XVI. grateful for the powerful patronage of the Blessed Virgin experienced in 1837, during the destructive Asiatic disease called the *Cholera*, resolved to present with his own hands a gemmed crown of gold to the Most Holy Virgin, and also her divine infant, on that day on which Paradise beheld her

crowned the Queen of Angels and of Saints. To this purpose he directed that, wholly at his expence, two crowns should be executed in gold rich with gems, in order to offer them on the morning of the feast of the Assumption, Aug. 15, at the accustomed papal chapel.

“The Pontifical altar of the said free Patriarchal Basilica was prepared with pomp for so sacred an office. The sacred picture taken from the Pauline or Borghese chapel, was placed on high under the tribune. Two flights of steps handsomely adorned, rendered on both sides the approach to the upper platform commodious, when the august ceremony was to be performed. Not only the whole tribune itself, but also the apsis and a portion of the principal nave of the church, was resplendent with lights arranged in beautiful symmetry. The chief Pontiff, about the hour of 8, A.M. went with his usual train to the church, and celebrated privately the first mass, and with his own hand distributed the Eucharistic bread to the faithful, among whom were found persons of the highest rank. After mass he went to the apartment of Cardinal Odescalchi, Arch-priest, and gathering together the sacred college and the various colleges of prelates in the Society, the Holy Father assumed the pontifical robes, and directed the *Sedia Gestatoria* with the usual procession to the chapel of St. Catherine, where he adored the most Holy Sacrament exposed there. From thence he went before the High Altar, and after kneeling and venerating the sacred picture, ascends the throne and is seated. Then, taking off the mitre, he rises and blesses with the prescribed rite the two crowns, which two salvers support, borne by two clergymen of the chamber, saying,

“Under thy protection we fly, &c.

“Pope—Our help is in the name of the Lord.

“ Response—Who made heaven and earth.

“ Pope—The Lord be with you.

“ Response—And with thy Spirit.

“ Let us pray.

“ ‘ Omnipotent and eternal God, by whose most beneficent arrangement all things were created of nothing, we suppliants pray thy Majesty to deign to bless, + and to sanctify + these crowns, made to adorn the sacred pictures of thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Mother the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, through the same Christ, &c. Amen.’

“ Then the Pope turned to his seat, placed the incense in the censer, and after blessing it, arose, sprinkled the crowns with holy water and incensed them. Afterwards he descends from the throne and kneels before the altar at the kneeling-stool, chanting the Antifona, ‘ Queen of Heaven!’ which the singers follow out with modulated voices. The chant being ended, the crowns were committed to the Prelates Pentini and Macioti, canons of the church, robed in the cotta and rochetta, and acting as deacon and sub-deacon to the Pope. Then the Pontiff, rising, took his mitre, and preceded by the two canons, and accompanied by two Cardinal deacons assisting in *Cappe rosse*, and by two auditors of the Rota, also in Cappa, ascends by the stairs at the Epistle side to the upper level where the sacred picture was placed. They remove the mitre, and then the Pope taking the crown which was designed for the head of the picture of Jesus, said in the act of placing it there—

“ ‘ As by our hands Thou art crowned on earth, so may we deserve to be crowned by Thee with glory and honour in the heavens.’ ”

“ Having then taken the other crown, he placed it on the head of the picture of the Blessed Virgin and said—

“ ‘ As by our hands Thou art crowned on earth, so may we deserve to be crowned through Thee, by Jesus Christ thy Son, with glory and honour in the heavens.’ ”

“ After the solemn crowning of the sacred images, amidst the rejoicing and universal commotion of the immense assemblage, the Pope descends the other stairs at the side of the gospel, lays aside the mitre, blesses the incense, places it in the censer, and incensing three times the sacred pictures, said,

Pope—“ A golden crown upon her head.

Response—“ The express sign of sanctity, the glory of honour, and the work of might.

Pope—“ Thou hast crowned her, O Lord.

Response—“ And made her have dominion over the works of thine hands.”

“ Let us pray.

“ Grant, O merciful Lord, by the crowning of the mother, &c.”

Such is the official and authorised account of this ceremony, in which the Pope himself took the most conspicuous part. And it is impossible to read it without remembering the similar ceremonies among the ancient Romans, when crowning the images of their heathen gods. There was the same mighty multitude—the same Pontifex Maximus—the same sacerdotal display—the same accumulation of pomps—and it is not too much to add, the same priestcraft on the part of the priests, and the same idolatry on the part of the people.

And now all this, borrowed as it is from the customs of the heathens, is celebrated every year at Rome under the

plea of its representing the triumph and exaltation of Christianity and the Church! We saw it in a church in the Corso, where it was exhibited in the evening before an immense assemblage of spectators, amidst an innumerable host of lights, that perfectly dazzled the eye unused to the glaring brilliancy of such a scene.

It will thus be perceived that although there are some ceremonies in the Church of Rome which may be regarded as *symbolical*, yet their general character is *scenical*. They are an attempt at the religious drama—a continuation of those tawdry shews and scenes that had their original in the vicious taste and depraved notions of religion that belonged to the middle ages, and which ought to have long since been flung aside in the advance of civilization and the progress of knowledge. The apostle has said “When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things.” Happy had it been if the Church of Rome had acted in the same spirit, instead of leaving her members, in these enlightened days, nothing but the shows and toys of the middle ages to satisfy their cravings for the better things of true religion.

If the people are ignorant of the leading facts and doctrines of the christian religion, there are two ways of enlightening them. One is by the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, the other is by these dramatic shews. Let all reasonable men judge, which of these is to be preferred. And if it be thought that there is danger of error in reading the Holy Scriptures, it should also be remembered that there is danger of superstition and idolatry in these scenic exhibitions.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BAMBINO: AND THE ADORATION OF THE CROSS.

THE BAMBINO OR IMAGE OF CHRIST—ITS MIRACULOUS ORIGIN AND HISTORY AS PUBLISHED AT ROME—THE SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEF RESPECTING IT—ITS EXHIBITION IN ARA CÆLI—THE PREACHING OF A CHILD—THE BLESSINGS OF THE BAMBINO—STRIKING SCENE—DEFENCE OF THE SYSTEM.—THE CHARGE OF IDOLATRY AN AWFUL ONE—THE SISTINE CHAPEL ON GOOD FRIDAY—THE ADORATION OF THE CROSS DESCRIBED—ITS DETAILS EXAMINED.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BAMBINO : AND THE ADORATION OF THE CROSS.

AMONG the various ceremonies or scenes transacted at Rome, is one that partakes, in a measure, of the symbolical character. It may be classed, though I believe not originally so designed, as one of the number. It is an exhibition of our Lord, under the form of an image, representing his childhood ; and the exhibition is extended to many of the events that transpired, in the interval from His birth to the time of His manifestation to the Wise men of the East—from the Nativity to the Epiphany.

I allude to ‘the Benediction of the Bambino.’

The most extraordinary fact, to be observed at Rome, as illustrating the more modern phases of the state of the church, is—THE BAMBINO. The word *Bambino*, is simply the Italian for *Child*, and has reference to the childhood of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom the term is constantly applied. Any image or picture of our Lord in his early age is so designated ; but as the child Jesus is emphatically *Il Bambino—the Child*, to designate Him as over and above

all else ; so among the multitudes of images and pictures, of the childhood of our Lord at Rome, there is one, so known and remarkable beyond all others, that it is styled emphatically *Il Bambino*—The Child. I allude to the Bambino of the Capitol—the Bambino of the church and convent of *Ara Cæli* at the Capitol.

This Bambino is a small doll, made of wood, and about two feet in length, not unlike, except in its attire, the dolls made for the amusement of our children in England or France. On its head is a royal crown of gold gemmed with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. From its neck to its feet, it is wrapped in swaddling-clothes, according to the custom of swathing infants on the continent. The two little feet are seen projecting beneath, so that the face and feet of the image are alone visible. The swaddling-clothes swathing the arms, the body and legs, deprive the image of all form, but make some compensation by the magnificence of the jewels with which they are covered. There are princely rubies, and precious emeralds, and brilliant diamonds, tastefully arranged to decorate the whole, so that the Bambino is a blaze of splendour. Whatever may be the value of the little wooden doll, which is thus magnificently gemmed, the swaddling-clothes which envelope it must be worth several thousand pounds of sterling money.

This Bambino is said and believed to be distinguished above all other images and representations of the same nature, by its miraculous origin—by its miraculous history—by its miraculous healing—by its magnificent display, and especially by the extent and depth of the devotional worship which is paid to it at Rome. It is the great and favourite Divinity of the lower classes of the Romans. And the ancient cry at Ephesus, “Great is Diana of the Ephe-

sians," was not more applicable than that at Rome, 'Great is the Bambino of Ara Cœli.'

The origin and history of this little image is not left to the fertile imaginations of the excited population. It has been carefully written and published at Rome, where nothing can be printed without the sanction of the authorities. An extract from this will give an authorized account of the matter—one of some importance—as it is difficult for a Protestant to write or speak of it without the appearance of exaggeration ; and it is as well to remove all suspicion.

It is entitled, 'Historical Notices of the *Miraculous Image* of the Child Jesus, which is venerated in the venerable presbyterial church of the Holy Mary in Ara Cœli at Rome ; with some devotional exercises to obtain the graces which are asked.'

"Among the many and illustrious *miraculous images* and sacred likenesses in the Holy City, the metropolis of Christendom, representing Jesus Christ our Lord, the Virgin Mother Mary, and the Saints, *the most miraculous effigy* in relief, which represents the Child Jesus, and which they reverently preserve in the convent of Holy Mary, in Ara Cœli, deserves particular mention. This effigy, from the most solemn day of the Holy Nativity, to the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord, remains exposed in that church to public veneration, in a beautiful and noble Presepio, where the whole Roman people assemble to ADORE IT (*ad adorarla !*)

"The little image of the Child Jesus, of which we speak, was carved in Jerusalem by a devout religious (monk) of the Order of the Minors of St. Francis, and he formed it of the wood of the olive, near the Mount of Olives ; and it was done with the precise view to its being transported to

Rome, and placed in the Presepio of Ara Cœli for public veneration. While the pious religious (monk) of the lay profession, wrought at the making of this little image, various marvellous things came to pass. In the first place, it happened, that being in want, among those barbarous people, of the colours for painting and perfecting the figure and form of the Holy Child, the devout workman, all anxious to give the fitting complement to the effigy of the Divine Infant, forthwith commenced to implore the assistance of heaven, with prayers accompanied by a living faith in the Omnipotent God : and besides with fastings, prayers, and other bodily mortifications ; and he obtained his object, for his prayers were heard, the Divine assistance being ready to help him. The good laic was asleep, and when he awoke, lo, a wonderful thing ! he found the devoted little image was, by a prodigy, become the colour of flesh ! The religious workman remains astonished and stupified at such a prodigy. He suddenly shed tears of tenderness, and prostrated himself on his knees before the sacred image of the Child Jesus, the Redeemer of the world : adoring Him figured in that image, and rendering to Him his devout thanks. All-rejoiced and content was the good workman, and having obtained so precious a treasure, he determines to bring it to the place before settled and planned, that is, to Rome, in the Capitoline Basilica of Holy Mary in Ara Cœli.

“The fame of such a prodigy soon spread, not only in Jerusalem, where it occurred, but also in the surrounding regions, whence all the Christians who lived there, came to adore it devoutly, (*ad adorarlo divotamente.*) And very many infidels go there from curiosity, but many conversions followed when their eyes came to the true light, which

the Incarnate Word represented in that little image gave to all.

“ In the end, the devout religious workman embarked, having with him this precious treasure in order to carry it to Rome. But behold, a new prodigy ! The voyage at first was very prosperous, and the weather always calm ; but, while the ship was borne on towards Italy, it was wrecked ; and the case of the image of the Holy Bambino appeared miraculously at Leghorn, in the state of Tuscany ! Immediately the news of this other prodigy was spread abroad, and *the miraculous image* was sought with great anxiety by the religious, (monks) and by all persons, for the fame of it had already arrived from Jerusalem, and was increased by our people ; from thence it was in a few days transported to Rome, and deposited in its destined seat of the Capitol. Then, on its face being first exposed to the public veneration in the fore-mentioned Basilica of the senate and people of Rome : the sighs, the clamours, the vivas, the applause of the devout believers ascend to the stars. All wept in tenderness, all prayed with fervour, all commend themselves from the heart, all ardently sought grace from it, and all securely obtained it.

“ It is stated that on one occasion a devout noble lady, from her great devotion, took away this little image of the Bambino Jesus, and brought it away to her house ; but after some days it *miraculously returned to Ara Cæli, ringing all the bells of the church and convents, as on a festival, without any person touching them !* All the religious (monks) run together at this prodigy, and to their highest astonishment and wonder, they behold the image of the Holy Bambino upon the altar !

“ It is on account of these wonderful things, that this

miraculous image has been venerated with special devotion by the Roman citizens; and afterwards was enriched by the faithful people with necklaces and with jewels, and every day it is adorned and gifted continually with more liberal offerings and donations, in such a manner, that one may see the image enriched with emeralds, sapphires, topazes, amethysts, diamonds, and other precious ornaments, among which is a considerable alamaro of five pieces, adorned with an hundred and sixty-two diamonds set in silver, of the value of five hundred and eighty scudi, presented by some person unknown.

“ This sacred and miraculous image is also carried to the sick every time when it is required; and every one admires the graces, which every day the Holy Child Jesus represented in this little image, imparts to the truly devout; and he who now writes these things, is a witness to having seen such and so great graces.”

Thus much will suffice for the origin and history of this remarkable image. To attempt any critical or nice examination or refutation of such statements, would be a waste of time and of words. That the whole affair is disbelieved and laughed at by the intelligent and educated is very certain, though they endeavour to justify it as a means of enriching the convent to which it belongs, and as a means of increasing what they call devotion, but what we call superstition, among the lower classes. But among those lower classes all the marvels respecting it are received with the most implicit faith—are well known among them, and have been detailed by persons of that class to myself as undoubted truth. An implicit belief in the Bambino of Ara Cœli is, next to a belief in the Virgin Mary, the most prominent article of faith in the creed of a Roman of that class.

If however it were no more than a speculative belief in the miraculous origin and history of this image, it would be comparatively unimportant. Its real importance arises from the painful and distressing fact, that it has become the source of the most degrading superstition, and the most gross idolatry—a superstition so degrading and an idolatry so gross, that if they have been equalled, they certainly have never been exceeded among the heathens of ancient or of modern times. This language may seem severe, and yet it will be found no more severe than the facts will justify.

It is universally propagated and believed among the lower classes, that if a woman is in her confinement and the time of her delivery is at hand, the presence of this Bambino laid on the bed at her feet, will ensure a safe delivery! It is also universally propagated and believed among them, that if any person is so extremely unwell that final recovery would seem doubtful, the presence of this Bambino will resolve the doubt, for recovery or death can always be determined according as the face becomes pale or flushed on its introduction! The prevalence of such notions leads the friends of the sick to send for the Bambino. The monks will not permit its presence unless at a considerable cost, and the result is that many a family is hopelessly impoverished by the money they give, and the convent is enriched by the money it receives. Ignorance may palliate all this on the part of the people, but no language can be too strong as applied to the priests, and monks, and church, which sanction this.

But strange as all may seem, it is not near so strange as the sight of the Bambino when going to visit its patients. It is a common saying among the people of Rome,

that the Bambino receives more and better fees from the sick, than all the medical men combined. It is certain at least that it is brought to visit its patients in grander style, for a state coach is kept for it, a coach quite as fine in its way as those of the Cardinals or Pope, a coach that seems a meagre imitation of some worn-out state-coach of a Lord Mayor of London. In this coach the Bambino is deposited, accompanied by some priests in full canonical ; and onward they move, stately and slow, as a rapid movement is thought inconsistent with the dignity of the image, and then as it passes, every head is uncovered, and every knee is bent in the streets through which it moves. The Pope may pass and be saluted as he passes ; the image of the Virgin Mary may pass and many a head is bared before it. The consecrated Host may pass, and some may kneel and some may salute ; but if the Bambino passes, every head is uncovered, and all the lower classes, let the streets be ever so wet and dirty, are prostrated in worship before it. Let others if they can, explain why it is that neither Cardinal nor Pope, neither the image of the Virgin, nor the consecrated Host itself, elicit the same degree of worship or prostration, as this wooden Bambino. I merely state the fact, and leave to others to explain it.

The great festival of this image begins at Christmas, and ends at the Epiphany. It is celebrated in the Church of Ara Cœli, and it ought to be visited repeatedly by every one, who wishes to become acquainted with the religion of modern Rome.

My first visit to this celebrated image was on Dec. 26th. On our arrival we found considerable difficulty in entering the Church, so great was the number of persons arriving and departing. The approaches and entrances were be-

sieged, by venders of pictures of "the most holy Bambino," of every size, and in every form, in sheets, and in frames, some in the most rainbow-colours, and others glittering in tinsel, to rival the brilliant gems they designed to represent. It was surprising to see the number of these that were purchased by the people, as they arrived or departed. Having at length obtained an entrance, and made our way, though with no little difficulty, through the crowd of persons who filled the Church, and who seemed collected there not to worship God, but like ourselves to see the sight,—we arrived in front of one of the side-chapels, which was fitted up for the occasion, and protected by a low range of rails from the mass of spectators. We were observed by some of the officials of the Church, who immediately advanced, and most courteously made way for us and placed us, to the exceeding envy of all else, within the rails, where free from all the pressure, we could examine the scene at our pleasure.

It was extremely pretty ; the chapel was fitted up as a stage, and the scene represented was the interior of the stable of Bethlehem, soon after the birth of our Lord. There were a cow and an ass, somewhat concealed, and apparently designed, as in some pictures, merely to shew that it ought to represent a stable. There was nothing else that could remind us of the place, for there sat the Virgin Mary gazing with natural delight upon her child, though attired in silk of the most vivid crimson, and adorned with a crown of gold, with necklaces of gems and bracelets of brilliant jewels. Such finery seemed unsuitable for that meek and lowly maiden, and no less uncongenial to the stable, or the society of the cow and the ass. Beside her stood the aged Joseph ; he was dressed not

unlike a monk, and leaned upon a long staff, and seemed quietly contemplating the child. The Bambino or child lay in an elegant cradle at their feet, the crown was upon its head, and its swaddling-clothes were a tissue of silk and silver and gold, while the diamonds and rubies, the amethysts and emeralds, and other precious stones, were as numerous as could well be arranged on so small an object. All this however only occupied one side of the chapel, and was very ingeniously managed so as to leave the other side, and all the back part, to be arranged as a distance. The scenic effect was admirable, considering the limited space. There was a rich and well-planted country in view ; far off in one direction were "the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks," not indeed "by night" for that could not be managed, but by daylight. They were seen not exactly keeping watch, but sleeping, with their sheep also sleeping around them ; while the angel hovers above them, coming to announce the birth of "the Saviour who is Christ the Lord." Afar off in another direction is seen a sort of procession winding its way between the hills, while a star, like a comet of stupendous magnitude, hangs suspended before them, thus denoting them as "the wise men of the East," who were coming to make their offerings to "the child then born and the Son then given." All this, however, did not complete the sight, for the roof of the scene and the extreme back distance was managed to perfection ; it was designed to represent the interior of the Heavens—the very Heaven of Heavens. In the centre was a half-length representation of God as "the Ancient of days," as an aged Father, looking down upon his Son in the form of flesh, while the whole heavens present a glory composed of "a multitude that no man could num-

ber" of cherub faces, all circling around the God, and like him looking down as in admiration upon the scene in the lowly stable of Bethlehem; and while we looked and thought of all before us, and the tones of the great organ swelled through the vaulted Church, and came softened and sweetened to the little chapel where this stage was arranged, we felt and could not but feel that however foolish, or wrong, or injurious, all this might be among the ignorant, it yet was admirably managed for stage effect, and though not without some errors of taste, it was on the whole as pretty a scene of the kind, as might be expected from wax-work and painted canvas.

On our next visit to the church, the throng of visitors had considerably diminished. It was at an interval of about a week, and the scene had changed. The Bambino no longer lay in its cradle, but was held in the arms of Mary, and both the mother and the child were attired in the same costly and magnificent apparel, as unsuitable to their lowly station as to the stable of Bethlehem. The Wise Men from the East had arrived, and, robed as kings, were presenting their rich and splendid offerings, while they adored the Messiah. In most other respects the scene was not much changed,

This however was not the only sight to be seen in this church, connected with the Bambino at this season. I was on December 26th. that, as we retired from this scene, we came unexpectedly upon another in this extraordinary drama. While multitudes of persons, almost exclusively of the lower orders, were arriving and departing in unceasing succession, we observed a little girl of about ten years of age, dressed modestly and not unlike a nun, elevated on a platform and preaching to a large congregation! She

concluded at the moment we arrived within hearing, and was immediately succeeded by a little boy of about the same age. He was robed in the ordinary dress of the clergy, with cassock and short surplice, with the usual cap worn by the priests in the churches. He was a perfect miniature of a priest. There was not a smile on his little face. He looked grave and serious. He seemed as if he felt what and whom he represented. The moment he took his place he proceeded with the utmost gravity to lift his cap in the usual way, and then to cross himself, and then to kneel in private prayer. He arose and resumed his cap—took out his white handkerchief and used it—looked gravely at the people, repeated a few words, again took off his cap, and after thus mimicking with the most perfect accuracy everything the priests and monks are in the habit of doing when going to preach, and at the same time mimicking them with a gravity of look and manner exceedingly droll in so young a child, he actually commenced a sermon. So admirably did the little fellow bear himself, that I could not divine whether all this was done in sober seriousness, or in mockery of the priests and monks, especially as the child was incomparably schooled in the acting. In all that required acting, the movement of the limbs and the expression of the face, he was inimitable, so that while he acted throughout with the utmost gravity, the whole congregation, consisting of men and women, monks and children, laughed long and loud at what seemed to them an admirable imitation of their preaching priests. And yet the sermon otherwise was not one to be laughed at. It was well and carefully written, and the little fellow had learned it by heart, and had most carefully been trained to go through every portion of it. He would now ad-

dress himself to the fashionable—now to the careless—now to the wicked. He would then appeal to the heavens—then to the earth—then to the Bambino, with his hand outstretched and his finger pointing to the scene before described. At one time his hands were clasped and his head hung upon his breast with an expression of deep sorrow. At another time his arms were flung wide and his little face turned as towards heaven in the expression of adoration. Then at the conclusion of each paragraph or division of his discourse he would in the most cool, collected, and solemn way, so as to excite considerable laughter, draw forth his handkerchief and apply it to his face, and then pause and prepare for again proceeding. And at the conclusion of all he knelt down, and repeated a prayer with great gesticulation, sighing, and flinging his arms about, as was common among the priests in such prayers, and in the end pronounced the blessing with all the usual crossings and other formalities. On the whole it was a very singular and amusing spectacle. It seemed as if it was thought that as this was the festival of the Bambino or child, so it was to be a Bambino or child, who was to preach on the occasion. I believe, however, that the custom is connected with schools, and that the cleverness and efficiency of the scholars is exhibited in this way. At all events the parents of this little fellow—and he was really a fine little fellow—looked on in very natural admiration on the clever way in which he enacted his part as the miniature of a priest. The Monks and Friars, who were in considerable numbers, laughed aloud and even clapped their hands, seeming thoroughly to enjoy the scene as a capital joke, while the mass of the people looked on and laughed and joked as if it were an amusing species of

Punch and Judy. It would be amusing, if only it were not within a church, and not a mockery of that solemn thing—religion.

But the grand fête-day of the Bambino is the Epiphany. It is the day of its great procession, exhibition, and blessing of the people before it is locked up for the year. This grand affair comes off in the afternoon of the Epiphany, and it is one of the most important at Rome. With the single exception of the Adoration of the Cross in the Sistine chapel on Good Friday, it is the most appalling and awful spectacle my eyes have ever witnessed. It were not honest to use softer language.

After witnessing the High Mass, celebrated by the Greek Patriarch in the Greek church, according to the Greek rites, we repaired about three o'clock to the church of Bambino—the *Ara Cæli*. It was exceedingly thronged, but there was a body of military to make arrangements and secure order. And this they affected admirably. There was through the whole length of the church, from the doors to the altar, a passage preserved open. Benches were judiciously arranged at each side of this passage, on which the spectators sat, and as no one was permitted to break this line, the long passage was preserved open for the proposed procession. There were many priests officiating at some service at the altar, and there was ample use of Holy Water, incense and music. In the midst of these services the priests left the altar and proceeded with incense down the aisle of the church. There were six priests, all robed, accompanying the chief or officiating priest, together with a large number of incense-bearers, candle-bearers, and other officials in canonicals. All these, together with the soldiers, as a guard of honour, passed down

the aisle, while some canticle was lowly chanted, and the censer waved, and the smoke ascended, and the perfume filled the church. On arriving at the chapel before described as fitted up for the Bambino, and which was at the farthest end of the church, the procession paused, the priest bowed low before it, they then formally incensed it, and again falling into procession as before, returned to the High Altar and resumed the services.

After some moments the curtains, which had screened from the view the whole choir behind the High Altar, were drawn aside, and there issued four men bearing enormous torches lighted, each torch composed of four large candles, and burning in prodigious candlesticks. At the same instant a company of soldiers took their station before these torch-bearers, and moved towards the side aisle of the church. And then there issued a long column of monks, all in their monkish habits, and every monk bearing a lighted candle or torch in his hand. Their number was about eighty, and as this long train of monks passed slowly by, they were followed by a military band, that belonged to the Pope's Guards, and their martial music rang and rang again, reverberating through the vaulted building with extraordinary power. This military band was followed by officials carrying staffs, these again by four torch-bearers as before, then by six priests in their robes, then by the officiating priest, supported by two others as assistants, then by certain officials, and finally by a guard of soldiers. In this procession all parties, priests, monks, ecclesiastics, and officials were robed in full costume. All the military carried their arms and were fully accoutred, and as the whole passed down the church, the

monks moving two by two with their candles, or torches, it presented a very singular and striking appearance.

In this order they proceeded down the side-aisle of the church, passing the stage where the Bambino lay. The head of the procession passed through the door at the end of this aisle ; and when the priest came to the stage, instead of passing on, he and his assistants paused, entered the stage, and with much reverence, and more ceremony, took the Bambino from the arms of the image of the Virgin Mary, and then followed the procession out of the church.

It was here that I witnessed one of the most extraordinary spectacles to be seen in the Church of Rome. I issued with the priests, that I might witness all, and I shall endeavour to describe it.

The position of the church of Ara Cœli is peculiar. It stands on the height of the Capitol ; its front approach is by a flight of one hundred and twenty-four steps of Grecian marble, said to be those that formed the approach to the Temple of Venus in the times of Heathenism. At the top of this magnificent mass of white marble, is the front of the church ; and it was on this spot I stood to witness ‘ the blessing of the most holy Bambino.’ It was one of those sights which, once witnessed, can never be effaced ; there on the mind it must remain ineffaceably graven for ever. The elevation of this spot was such as to command a view of a large portion of the space and ascent of the Capitol : and further below all the wide place or street by which it is approached, together with the long flight of steps ascending to the church : the whole were thronged to excess. The masses of the people were wedged together as closely as possible, presenting to the eye one com-

pact body of living things from the Capitol above, down the slope, to the space below, and then up the marble steps to the church. There could not be less than five thousand persons, every head uncovered, and every face upturned, gazing intently upon the scene in front of the church.

And such a scene !

There, at the height of an hundred and twenty-four steps above the people—there stood the priests in all their splendid robes. On one side were arranged about forty monks : on the other hand about as many more : and clothed in their sombre dresses and waving their blazing torches in their hands, they presented a scene of the most striking appearance. In the midst were the more immediate officials holding aloft their gigantic torches : and in the centre of these again, were the priests, surrounding the High Priest, who held the little image—the Bambino, in his hand. At least one hundred torches, each in the hand of an ecclesiastic, glittered and flamed around. The monks stood in their places ; the ecclesiastics gathered together ; the incense was waved and enwrapped all for a moment in its clouds and its perfume ; the military band filled the whole place with a crash of music, and the soldiers of the guard presented arms, as the Chief Priest lifted the little image—slowly lifted the Bambino, raising it above his head. In an instant, as if the Eternal Jehovah were visibly present in the image, among the vast multitude gazing from far beneath, every head was uncovered before it, and every knee was bent to it, and almost every living soul was prostrate before it. He raised it slowly a second time ; he raised it in the same manner only more slowly the third time ; and the muttered words of prayer ascended from

the vast multitude, and told how deeply and universally rooted among the people is this worship of the Bambino. I felt as if my blood was frozen within me at so awful a spectacle.

Another scene soon followed. The Bambino had been worshipped by those without the church, and had conferred his blessing. He was now to be worshipped by those within : and they were to receive his blessing.

The procession re-entered the church by the other side-door, and passed along the other side-aisle to the altar, and again descended the aisle which they had already traversed when they first went for the Bambino. And now they approach the High Altar by the great aisle, through the passage already described as prepared for them, the whole length of the body of the church. The procession had thus passed once to get the Bambino, and three times with the Bambino. On this last occasion, the priest as before holding it before his breast in an erect position, and with its back to himself, brought it to the altar and placing it there, he and his assistants knelt and adored it, in the form and manner as if it were the consecrated Host ; and after a short space, he again rose, and taking it in his hands, held the little image before him. It was clothed with silver and gold brocade, covered with splendid jewels, with a magnificent crown on its head, and its little feet projecting as if naked underneath the gorgeous swaddling-clothes. The music of the military band rung through the arched aisles ; the incense poured forth its volume of perfume ; the hundred lights waved in the hands of the monks ; the priest lifted the little image above his head : and in an instant, as if by some wand of the magician, the whole assembly, at least 2,000 souls, lay prostrate on the earth !

A thrill ran through my whole frame at the sight. He raised it the second time; he raised it the third time; he then slowly returned it to the altar. The people arose from their prostration, and the priest carried their idol behind the curtains, and the festival of the Bambino was ended.

This is called ‘the Benediction or Blessing of the Bambino.’ The priest lifts it three times in the presence of the people; and to obtain this blessing, the poor simple populace of Rome congregate in thousands.

There is no apology, and there can be no defence for this, which presents a plain instance of idolatry, as palpable and as gross as the very worst that ever characterized the ancient heathens of Rome. There was bowing, kneeling, and prostration, to a little wooden image. And there was in all this, the belief that there was divine power in this image, to give the divine blessing. Unless the worshippers believed the image had power to confer blessing—they would not have thus assembled to obtain that blessing, and they would not have thus humbly prostrated themselves to receive it. It was not regarded by them as a mere image, a mere powerless thing, a mere representation of the Child Jesus; but they regarded it as a thing that had miraculous powers, and had actually wrought miracles—they regarded it as a thing possessed of the divine power of conferring on them the divine blessing; and their whole conduct, however excusable in their ignorance, displayed the worst features of the worst idolatry.

Nor can it be said that this is without sanction. It is transacted in that city of Rome, where all that is regarded by the church as erroneous in religion, is instantly suppressed and vigorously punished. It is transacted by a

large number of priests and monks, of whom not less than ninety took an active part in the ceremony, besides the many ecclesiastics who mingled in the assembly. And it is transacted with the positive knowledge of the authorities of the church, and with their most certain sanction, for the Pope's own guards attended as a guard of honour for the image. When the men of Babylon bowed down before "the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up," it was not a more gross or more authorized idolatry than that which we witnessed before the little Bambino. The act of idolatry was perpetrated at the 'blessing of the Bambino' among the assembly collected without the church, and it was then repeated at 'the blessing of the Bambino' among those collected within the church.

On objecting against all this, in a conference with one of the priests at Rome some time afterwards, and stating that there was nothing more likely to give offence to the English Protestants—nothing more calculated to impress them with strong repugnance against the Church of Rome, as a superstitious and idolatrous Church; he replied, that their religion, and religious rites and religious scenes, were arranged for Catholics and not for Protestants—for Italians and not for English; and that it was found by experience, that it was such rites and scenes that were most suitable to a Roman or Italian person; and that however unwilling to alienate the people of other lands, they yet were bound to adopt a religious system suitable to the peculiarities of their own.

On again objecting, that the whole act and form of all that had taken place at *Ara cæli*, was stamped ineffaceably with the characters of superstition and idolatry, beyond all that we had previously imagined as possible in the Church

of Rome, he answered by a fair and frank acquiescence in our views, expressing it as his own private and personal feeling, that he himself not only could not join in it ; but would never be present at it, lest he should seem to sanction it ; and he added that he believed that such opinions as he expressed, were held by the very highest authorities in the Church.

On objecting still further, that if the authorities of the Church viewed the worship of the Bambino in this light, it became the more the duty of His Holiness to abolish the " benediction of the Bambino " as he had abolished the exhibition of the birth of our Lord at S. Maria Maggiore, and the illumination of the cross at St. Peter's, on account of the scandals connected with them—that it was all the more his sacred and solemn duty to do this, if indeed he regarded it as promotive of superstition or idolatry ; he rejoined that such a course was not likely, nor would it be wise or prudent—that it was regarded as a part of the religious liberty of the people, that they should not be interfered with, but should be allowed to have their religious rites as pleased themselves ; that the monks, whose numbers gave them vast power, would lose their wealth, and would therefore be alienated from the Pope, if he interfered ; and finally, any interference would lead to some commotion, which it were more wise and prudent to avoid ; adding with a most expressive smile, that we had seen the imprudence and folly of such uncalled-for interference, when the English Bishop of Exeter had so unnecessarily interfered with a display of authority, in the matter of surplices !

I felt then and feel still, that the interference of authority in so weighty a matter as superstition and idolatry is

wise and prudent, while the interference in such trivial matters as preaching in gowns or surplices may be both foolish and unnecessary.

When a mind deeply imbued with the spirit of true Christianity—a spirit so full of gentleness and love—a spirit that gladly thinketh no evil, contemplates the charge of IDOLATRY, advanced against so large a section of the Christian churches as the church of Rome, it may well be pardoned if it recoil from a thought so terrible, and refuse to give credence to a charge so awful.

This tendency to refuse all encouragement to the frightful charge, is strengthened by the recollection that it is denied as often as it is made, and as indignantly denied as it is resolutely made. The Church of Rome does not *intend* to commit idolatry, her members have no *intention* of committing idolatry; and it is argued that they ought to be judged by their intentions, as to such acts as are the subject of the accusation. It is just at this point that Christian charity may be stretched too far. No man *intends* to commit idolatry: whether among the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians of the ancient world, or the Chinese, Hindoos, Mahommedans of modern times, no one has ever *intended* to commit idolatry; and whether worshipping Jupiter or Serapis—whether praying to Fo or Juggernaut, they *intend* to worship God—to worship him whom they believe to be the creator and ruler of the world. Their *intentions* may be right, but their *acts* are wrong, and the purity of their intentions has never saved them from the accusation of idolatry.

And this—saddening and painful as it is to write it, and yet more saddening and painful to witness it—is precisely the case with the Church of Rome. Her intentions may

be right, her acts of worship may be wrong : and having undertaken a Pilgrimage to Rome, in order that I might not be obliged to adopt opinions by hearsay, but might be enabled to examine and judge for myself as to the state of the Church of Rome, I feel solemnly bound to declare my conviction, that she is liable most fully to the awful charge of IDOLATRY.

I may instance also THE ADORATION OF THE CROSS, as performed by his holiness the Pope, by all the Cardinals, and the whole court of Rome on Good Friday.

The ceremonies of Good Friday present less interest to the thoughtless spectator than those of Palm-Sunday, of Thursday or of Easter-day ; but to the thoughtful enquirer into religion they possess an intense interest. I stood among them a stranger from a far-off land, and I confess that I was more deeply moved by the ceremonies of this day than by anything I had seen. The occasion of this I must describe, premising that Good Friday is remarkable for the three ceremonies of the Adoration of the Cross—the resurrection of Christ, and the mass of the Presanctified. These are celebrated in the Sistine chapel.

I attended early. The number of spectators or worshippers was very small, and at no period of the day exceeded forty persons, exclusive of the officials of the court. As I was one of the first in the chapel, I secured a most desirable position for observation. The chapel was stripped of all its accustomed hangings, the altar stood without its rich cloth, divested of its usual display of silver and gold,—bare, cold and naked. The throne was stripped of its splendour, and looked as if laid by in some store-house, the benches of the Cardinals were cold and bare, the floor was left without its carpet, no candles burned on

the altar, no torches blazed as usual on the screen ; all seemed dull and dark, and all this was designed to represent the mourning and desolation of the church at the crucifixion of Jesus. In the authorised " offices of the Holy Week," it is stated, that " at the reading of the lesson and prayers, the candles are not lighted, in order to express the darkness that covered the earth at the death of Jesus Christ ; and the altar is without its coverings, to represent the nakedness of the Redeemer on the Cross." On the previous day the plaintive strains of the *miserere* were intended to shadow forth the agonies of Jesus Christ. On the same day the office of Tenebræ, with the gradual extinction of candle after candle on the altar, was intended to represent the miraculous darkness that covered the land at his death ; and now, on this day, the sorrow and desolation of the church was to be yet further represented by the desolate appearance of the Sistine chapel, without carpets, without silver, without gold, without candles, without torches, without any of its usual decorations. In order to carry out this design, the cardinals entered robed in purple, the mourning colour for cardinals. From their cloaks to their stockings, all was purple. The bishops entered, having exchanged their purple stockings for black, their appropriate colour for mourning ; all were attired as at a solemn funeral ; and all seemed consistently chill and comfortless.

The services of the day, the lessons, the tracts, the psalms, and the prayers, may be found in the " *Offizio della Settimana Santa*," published by authority, but too long for insertion here. The Pope was not present at the commencement of these services, but entered before the sermon. A monk approached the throne of the Pope,

soon after his entrance, and on his knees asked a blessing for himself, and craved an indulgence for others. His request was granted, and he entered the pulpit and preached a sermon of *seven minutes* duration; and sitting down, he again rose and read publicly the form of indulgence, for thirty years and thirty quaterns. The following is the rubric.

“He approaches the throne, and bending on his knees without kissing the foot, demands the usual indulgence of thirty years and as many quaterns, which he publishes after the sermon in the usual form.”

A quatern is forty days, so that thirty of these being added to the thirty years, the indulgence is one of thirty years and twelve hundred days.

The great ceremony of the day then commences.

A cross made of wood stands upon the altar. It is enveloped in a black veil. The deacon hands it to the officiating Cardinal. He, standing with his back to the altar and his face to the people, holds the cross before the eyes of the congregation. Then loosening the black veil which envelopes it, he uncovers one arm of the cross—pauses—holds it conspicuously before the congregation, and exclaims with a loud voice.

“Behold the wood of the Cross!”

And the response bursts from the choir,

“Come, let us adore it!”

And immediately the Pope, the Cardinals, and all present kneel and adore it, and then resume their seats.

Again the officiating Cardinal uncovers the second arm of the cross—pauses—exclaims as before—

“Behold the wood of the Cross!”

And the response again bursts from the choir,

“ Come, let us adore it ! ”

And, as before, the Pope, the Cardinals, and all present kneel and adore it, and then resume their seats.

Again, the officiating Cardinal uncovers the whole cross—pauses—and exclaims as before.

“ Behold the wood of the Cross ! ”

And the response again bursts from the choir,

“ Come, let us adore it ! ”

And immediately the Pope, the Cardinals, and all present kneel and adore it a third time.

All this was painful enough to me, yet it proved only “ the beginning of sorrows.” There was a solemnity—a silence, a stillness in all, which combined with the appearance of the chapel, made it very impressive ; and this very impressiveness it was that made all so painful.

The Cardinal with his assistants left the altar, and placed the cross on a cushion, on the floor of the chapel, a few paces from the steps of the altar, and retired.

And here the ceremony commenced indeed. Two or three Cardinals approached the Pope, they stripped off his splendid robes, they removed his glittering mitre, they took off his embroidered shoes, they laid aside his spangled gloves, till he stood before his throne without one emblem of his royal or papal office. There stood the old man, bare-headed and bare-footed, and stripped till he seemed to retain little else than a loose white dressing-gown, the dress of a monk of Camaldoli. There he stood, not alone, as if the act were a voluntary humiliation, but in the hands of the Cardinals, who, intending to help him and uphold him, seemed to be his guards to force and compel him. There the old man, no longer looking like a Pope, descended from the throne and seemed like one led away to be punished, or

to do penance. I could not help thinking that the old man was in a great measure, an unwilling actor in this scene ; there was much uneasiness in his manner ; there was dissatisfaction in his face ; and his whole appearance was that of a man who was obliged to act against his conscience, in complying with a custom of the Church.

Having conducted the Pope to the end of the chapel, they turned and faced the cross, which lay on the floor near the step of the altar. There they made him kneel and adore it. They raised him, and conducting him some two or three paces nearer, they again made him kneel a second time and adore the cross. Then again they raised him, and leading him nearer still, they again the third time made him kneel and adore the cross. Here at the cross they raised him, and then again he knelt, then rose again and then knelt again. Prostrate before it—on knees and hands, he kissed it, and, according to custom, left an hundred scudi of gold as an offering beside it. He was afterwards conducted to his throne and robed, while the most exquisite music from the choir accompanied the whole ceremony.

When this is completed by the Pope, the same act is performed by each of the cardinals, all without shoes, adoring and kissing the cross. These are followed by the bishops, heads of orders, &c., all adoring it in like manner, and all making to it an offer of money.

The Deacons then spread the cloth on the altar, light the candles, and reverently place the cross, no longer on the floor, but on the altar amidst the candlesticks.

Such is—THE ADORATION OF THE CROSS :—An act of worship that moved me intensely, infinitely more than anything I had witnessed at Rome. It was an act the

most solemn and impressive, that bore every characteristic of IDOLATRY.

A few considerations will justify this statement.

1. The cross, that was thus solemnly adored, was not adored as being the symbol of a crucified Saviour. It was not the sign or symbol of a doctrine. There was special care taken, that it should not be so regarded. The words were not *ecce crucem*, but *ecce lignum crucis*. And this is the distinction always used among theologians, between the *doctrine* of the cross and the *wood* of the cross. This was an adoration of the wood.

2. Neither was this adoration paid to the cross as a relic, as a supposed fragment of the true or original cross. The rubrical directions, if that term may be applied, require that this shall *not* be such relic or fragment : and it is not till the act of adoration to this mere wood of the cross has been performed, that the relic or fragment of the true cross is produced and exhibited. They accordingly have two crosses for Good Friday : one, an ordinary cross of ebony, and this is the one adored. The other, composed out of relics of the true cross, is subsequently exhibited, and the first removed.

3. The word is—Adoration. It is not *veneration*, the term usually applied to relics ; nor is it *invocation*, the term applied to the saints : nor is it *worship*, a term of more general use : but it is *adoration*, which implies *divine worship*—the worship that belongs to God.

4. That it was the highest species of worship, is apparent in the manner of the act. The shoes were removed ; the robes were laid aside ; and greater solemnity was given to the act than I have seen in the adoration of the Host. It is remarkable too, that there was then no Host on the

altar ; it was in the sepulchre in the Pauline chapel. And when afterwards the Pope and cardinals brought in the Host, and paid adoration to it, in the same place where they had adored the wood of the cross, they did not remove their shoes or lay aside their robes, but adored it with far less of solemnity, than they had already shewn to the wood of the cross.

There was a solemnity truly awful in this act. The chapel, as already described, was divested of all its ornaments. The altar stood without its lighted candles. All the high functionaries and court were robed in mourning. The choir, without instrumental music, breathed a low and gentle harmony. All else preserved an unusual, a death-like silence. The whole assembly appeared to feel a thrill run throughout them. They seemed to hold their very breath in suspense. They strained their eyes to see some awful act ; and they saw it. Amidst every circumstance that could give an imposing solemnity to the scene, the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ and Head of the Church, was stripped of his mitre, his shoes, his robes—conducted along the church, made to kneel at the cross at a long distance, as if in awe—then conducted some paces nearer, and again made to kneel as if in awe—then again conducted nearer still, and then again made to kneel and rise three times, as if it were impossible to adore that cross enough. I am free to confess, that my heart sunk within me. The habit of seeing so many ceremonies, had made me callous, but this moved me to tears. I felt a fearfulness, a solemn dread, and I could not refrain from weeping at seeing that aged man, so near eternity, led like a victim, and apparently an unwilling one, to an act of IDOLATRY, the most clear and perfect my imagination could conceive.

But willing or unwilling—God only knoweth the heart and its intentions—both the Pope and Cardinals, on that occasion, perpetrated an act of clear and undoubted IDOLATRY.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

THE NUMBERS ATTENDING THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH OF ROME—
AT THE MASS—AT THE VESPERS—AT SERMONS—THE CHARACTER OF
THEIR DEVOTION—AT THE MASS—THAT OF THE LOWER ORDERS—
THAT OF THE HIGHER ORDERS, CARDINALS, PRIESTS, &c.—ITS SINGU-
LAR APPEARANCE—ITS DEFENCE BY A PRIEST—ABSENCE OF ALL
TRUE COMMUNION—THE VESPERS—THE ROSARY EXPLAINED—THE
FAVOURITE SERVICES OF THE LOWER ORDERS—THE RESPONSES OF
THE PEOPLE—THE LITANY OF ST. FLORIAN.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

HAVING written thus much on the religious ceremonies and observances in the churches at Rome, I must now advert to the congregations that worship within them. And first as to their numbers.

The facts which I observed, proved very different from my anticipations, in this as in many other particulars. And as the numbers differ according to the services performing, it is necessary to distinguish between them.

The sacrifice of the Mass is the grand service of the forenoon. The number of persons in attendance is variable. In some churches, which are popular, it is a sort of fashion to attend. In others there is scarcely one living soul beyond the officiating Priest and his assistant. It has been my lot repeatedly to attend from nine to twelve o'clock, and to reckon no more than three or four persons present. And even at St. Peter's on ordinary days, when no high ceremony is expected, and where I have witnessed five or six masses all celebrating at so many different altars at the same time, I have reckoned sometimes not more than three or four persons at each, and on many occasions

I have observed the mass wholly neglected, and without one person in attendance beyond the official assistant. There are however some occasions on which, and some churches where, a comparatively large number is certain to attend. Very seldom, however, except on occasion of the high ceremonies, does the number exceed eighty or an hundred, even in the most favourite churches; but as the number of churches at Rome is large in proportion to the population, the attendance on the whole must be regarded as considerable.

All this refers to the week-days. The numbers are, as might be expected, much larger on the Sunday.

The service of Vespers, and the Litanies, belong to the afternoon. All the churches of Rome, except the seven which are entitled Basilicas, are closed at twelve o'clock and are continued closed till the hour of three. After that hour very few persons indeed are found to enter, unless there is some special ceremony or festival. The service of Vespers does not generally attract a congregation, unless there is music expected; the people going to hear the music rather than to join the Vespers; but as the Litany is usually appointed for special occasions, there is generally a good attendance when it is expected, the people joining in the responses with great spirit. At other times I have entered the churches and found no living thing. But generally some few persons may be seen entering hastily—selecting some favourite altar or shrine or picture—kneeling there for about half a minute, and then removing to another for the same short space, or retiring as hastily as they entered, appearing as if passing through the street and just entering the church to offer a short prayer and then to resume their route. Very frequently five or six

persons may be seen sitting in different parts of the church, and sideling over to the stranger to ask an alms, as if they resorted to the church as the best station for begging. And often—very often, some poor, shrinking, humble creature may be seen kneeling in some dark corner, and there gazing intently on some picture of the Virgin Mary and telling her beads. It is at times very touching to witness the simple devotion of these poor ignorant creatures, hiding themselves from view, and there striving to save their souls or the souls of dear relatives departed, from their supposed suffering in purgatory. We have at times been much affected by scenes like this, where the poor things seemed striving to atone for a life of sin in themselves or others, by secret penitence and prayer. And we could at such times have wept to think of the deep darkness and ignorance in which the lower classes of the people of Rome seemed to be hopelessly immersed. O may they never be judged in the Great Day by the light that we possess in our own land !

But although thus a few solitary persons may be seen entering the churches, yet generally the attendance at the service in the afternoon is as small as can well be imagined. We have frequently witnessed the Vespers celebrated, sometimes by two, sometimes by three, sometimes by ten priests, and not a single individual to form or represent a congregation ?

But it is at Rome as in England, and among Romanists as among Protestants, where there is a sermon there is a comparatively large attendance, varying of course according to the popular talents of the preacher. Sermons are seldom preached at Rome except during the season of Advent, to the Epiphany, and during the season of Lent.

For fully two thirds of the year—for eight months of the twelve, there are few or no sermons unless on special occasions ; and therefore when the season for sermons comes round, the people, who are fond of them, are eager to attend, and the attendance is considerable. We constantly attended to hear these sermons. And we have heard some even in these seasons, when the hearers were not twenty in number ; while we have witnessed an attendance of perhaps five hundred where there was a popular preacher. We heard the ablest, the most celebrated and popular preachers at Rome, and it must be acknowledged that if the people attend the mass as a matter of religious duty, they attend the sermons as a source of religious enjoyment.

On the whole, so far as the attendance in the churches is concerned, it may be said that on all *extraordinary* occasions, such as the High Ceremonies, which the Pope and Cardinals attend—or the exhibition of certain miraculous relics—the attendance is proportionately large. But on *ordinary* occasions the numbers are few indeed, unless in some favourite church. The masses usually called those of the *bon ton*, at the hour of noon, at the church de Santi Apostoli and the church de S. Carlo Boromeo on Sunday, are well attended by those who lay claim to the epithet of fashionable.

And now as to the devotional character of the congregations. This is at least as important a particular as the numbers in attendance, though certainly a more difficult and delicate subject. We cannot judge the heart, and therefore must avowedly only record external appearances. These vary according to the service in which the people are engaged, whether at the Mass—at the Rosary—or at the Litanies, &c.

The manner in which the attention and devotion of the congregation is exhibited during the service of the mass, cannot fail to strike an observant Protestant. There is in the attention and devotion of the Romanist, something so unusual, so unlike anything among us, that it cannot fail to arrest the attention. It is so totally different, so alien from all that would be regarded as attention or devotion among us, that it seems both unnatural and unaccountable in thinking beings. In order to make it intelligible, it is necessary to view the two classes of Italians.

The poorer and more ignorant classes, all kneel and pay their devotions in whatever part of the Church they please ; being, by an admirable arrangement, and one well worthy of imitation, as free and welcome as their richer neighbours. While kneeling, they are generally occupied in prayer, not however in attending to the words of the priest, while celebrating the service of the mass, or joining with him in prayer or praise, or the Gospel or Epistle. He may pray, but they do not hear him ; he may praise, but they do not heed him ; he may read the Scriptures, but they mind him not ; all he says is in Latin ; whether he read the confession or the consecration or the Gospel, all is in Latin, and in a suppressed voice, so that no one hears him, and even hearing him no one understands. The poor people therefore continue their own devotions, perfectly distinct from his devotions ; their prayers are altogether distinct from his prayers, their service has nothing in common with his service. But instead of attending to him and joining with him, they are all occupied in telling their beads. This perhaps requires explanation :—they have a string of beads, every tenth bead being different from the others ; holding one of the common beads in their fingers,

they repeat the "Hail Mary, &c.," and so with the next bead and the next, till they have said nine of these short prayers, holding the nine beads in succession. They then hold the tenth or different bead, and repeat the Lord's Prayer. Having said this, they pass to the common beads again, and so the same series is again and again resumed. This, which is called the bead-prayer or rosary, varies according to some monastic rules ; in some the number being nine, and in others seven, and even ten beads. But the whole body of the poorer and more ignorant classes, are occupied during mass with this service of their own ; it is strictly individual and private, each attending exclusively to his own, and the only union or communion is in their common inattention to every word that falls from the priest. He stands at the altar, he goes through his whole service, he is strictly and rigidly attent to every ceremonial. But the people, wholly inattentive to him, and taking no part whatever with him, regard all his proceedings as *his* affair, as *his* service, to be performed *for* them, and not participated in *by* them. They therefore repeat their own prayers, in such form as may please them best, and it is only when the attendant at the altar rings the bell, to announce to them the elevation of the host, that they cease their private prayers ; and, kneeling to adore the host, return after the ringing of the bell again for the elevation of the cup, to their private prayers as before.

The higher and educated classes act differently. The difference, however, is one of detail and not of principle ; they are equally inattentive and indifferent to the precise service of the mass, as performed by the officiating priest ; all the words he utters—all the prayers he offers—all the Gospel and Epistle he reads, pass unheeded as the idle

wind. This does not arise from any indifference to religion or any inattention to devotion, for they are sometimes deeply religious and absorbingly devout ; but from the fact that their religion and devotion are altogether private and individual. The service of the mass being in Latin, which they do not understand, instead of Italian which they know, they bring, each for himself, their own devotional books with them, while they are wholly inattentive and indifferent to the priest. Gentlemen and ladies appear with their favourite books of prayers ; monks and priests are there with their breviaries or favourite authors ; bishops and cardinals attend with their offices or other books of devotion. Some few have translations of portions of the service of the mass, but almost every one has his own book, different from that of his fellow-worshipper, and all different from that of the priest who officiates.

I have repeatedly looked into the books of the worshippers, reading with them during the service, and I have seen one reading a book of psalms, and another one of devout meditations, every one something different from his neighbour, and all different from that of the priest. I have stood between a monk and a priest ; and while a cardinal was celebrating the mass, the monk on my left was reading his breviary with a marvellous volubility : and the priest on my right was reading a volume of prayers to the Virgin Mary ; and a gentleman before me, a psalm.* I have stood in that part of the Sistine Chapel, where I could overlook the books of five or six of the cardinals ; and no two of them were reading the same thing. I have repeatedly observed this, and say most solemnly, that ex-

* “ How is it, brethren, when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath an interpretation ? ” 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

cept during the holy week, when they followed some of the services, I never saw them reading the same place with the officiating cardinal. In the general congregations of the churches in Rome, one person has a breviary, another an office ; one person is reading a psalm, another a litany ; one is reading some devout meditation, another offering some prayer to the Virgin ; one is earnestly praying to St. Catherine, another devoutly praying to St. Cecilia. It is among them precisely the same as it would be among us, if in a Protestant Church one person was reading Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, and another Barrow's Sermons ; or as if, having the Book of Common Prayer, one was reading the litany and another the communion ; one the psalms, and another the ten commandments ; or as if, while the clergyman read the lesson from Isaiah, one of the congregation was reading from the book of Samuel, and another from Revelation ; while no one heard the clergyman, no one heeded him, and all had their favourite books of devotion, and were occupied exclusively with them. If this could be conceived among us and in our Protestant Churches, then some conception might be had of the system of Rome. Nor is this written of the custom of a few, or of what might be regarded as an abuse of the system ; but " speaking that I do know, and testifying that I have seen," over and over again and on every occasion, I must declare it to be the general system at Rome—a system that is at once adopted, fearlessly avowed, and warmly defended by the priests, as the best and most desirable system.

In one of my conferences with the priests, I took occasion to refer to this. I stated what my own eyes had witnessed, among the Cardinals and Priests on one hand, and among the body of the people on the other.

It was stated in reply, in excuse for the Cardinals, that every one of them had already had a mass performed in his private house, by his private chaplain—that this takes place every morning, and that the church does not expect from them any attention farther than that of a devout frame of mind, during any subsequent mass. The system as prevalent among the people generally, who had not this excuse of a private mass, was necessarily defended on other grounds.

First, it was argued, that the mass was a sacrifice performed *for* the people by the priest, and that in order to its efficacy and value, all that was required of the people was a devout frame of mind. It was urged that according to the judgment of the church, it was not necessary they should follow the prayers or understand the service, but only that by meditation during the service they should cultivate a devotional feeling.

Secondly it was argued, that it was desirable the people should have different prayers, that so every one might have those most suitable to himself, and that the habit of not following the priest had the good effect of preventing their becoming weary of hearing the service too often. Besides which it was to be regarded as a part of Christian liberty, that every one should pray as pleased himself, and not merely as the church desired.

Such were the grounds on which this system was excused; whether they can be esteemed good or otherwise, it is my duty honestly to register them. I objected that it is a sign that there is in the church of Rome no communion of saints in the worship of God. I do not allude to the evening services of the litany of Mary, or the litany of the Saints, in which the response of “*Ora pro nobis,*”

and other responses are fully given by the people; but I allude to that which is the *juge sacrificium*, their daily sacrifice, the mass. In this there is no communion of heart or feeling; every one is praying only for himself individually; none are praying for the brethren around. In the services of the Church of England, all the members utter the same prayer and sing the same praise, and all those services are in the first person plural, so as to enable all to pray *for* each other, as well as *with* each other, and all to pray and praise in harmony with the minister of God, who leads in these beautiful services. This exquisite feature of the Church of England is altogether lost in the congregations of the Churches of Rome.

All this applies chiefly to the character of devotion observable during the service of the mass. It assumes a somewhat different aspect during other services. The Vespers, when accompanied with music, is sometimes very well attended: but the attendants are the English and other strangers, whose object is altogether to hear the music. The Romans very seldom attend. Even at St. Peter's on the days when the choir is expected, the attendance is almost wholly of the English and strangers. And on ordinary days, when the choir is not expected, I have seen the whole corps of St. Peter's, to the number of sixty or eighty, in the choir-chapel—the Vesper service performing; and not a single person to represent a congregation. A few persons might be seen walking about the church and admiring its marbles and other objects of interest, but no one attending to the service, except the ecclesiastics. The same remark applies to S. Giovanni di Laterano, where I have seen a corps of thirty or forty ecclesiastics, and no

congregation ; and generally it may be said, that the service of Vespers, as such, is quite neglected.

The service of the Rosary, or the mysteries of the Rosary, are often added to the Vespers in the churches and chapels of the monasteries. It is the favorite service of the lower classes. Somewhat has been already said of its nature, but it requires more explanation.

In a little manual entitled—‘ The Mysteries for reciting the Most Holy Rosary to the Virgin Mary ’—published by authority at Rome in 1842, there is the following introduction.

‘ The man, who, being enrolled among the confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary, has nothing obliging him under the pain of sin or any other pain, but solely wishing to participate in the blessings which are enjoyed in the confraternity of the Rosary or religion of St. Dominic, and the Indulgences and graces conceded by the Supreme Pontiff, ought to say once a week the whole Rosary or Crown of our Great Lady, that is, *one hundred and fifty Ave Marias, and fifteen Pater Nosters*, which make in all fifteen stations (*poste*) of the ordinary crown. And he is not obliged to say more, unless he wishes to redouble for himself the merits and Indulgences, as he can do. And these hundred and fifty Ave Marias, and fifteen Pater Nosters, arranged in fifteen stations, they ought to say, who can do so and who know them, undergoing some trouble in order to learn them, contemplating the fifteen divine mysteries of Jesus Christ, and of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, and at every station of the said Crown or Rosary, one mystery, of which the first five are called—Joyous, the second five—Dolorous, and the third five—Glorious.’

This is the favourite service of the lower orders. Com-

paratively, however, it is seldom performed by the clergy as a public service in their churches, but the poor, simple, and ignorant people have recourse to it at all times ; so that even when the mass is celebrating, or the Vespers are performing, or the relics are exhibiting, they adhere to the Rosary, and occupy themselves in it. They sometimes say it in their own homes. They may often be seen saying it in the streets, but the church is the chosen place. I once saw a woman insert her hands and rosary through an iron railing, so as to have them inside the church, while she herself was obliged to stay outside. And I observed another, when the doors of the church were shut, insert her hands and Rosary through a hole cut in the door apparently for that purpose ; and thus she said her Rosary. The idea seemed to be, that it was more efficacious when said within the church than without it ; and that it was not so necessary for the person of the worshipper, as for the Rosary itself, to be within the church. This is mentioned to illustrate the feeling of the lower orders.

It may have been observed, that the Litany of the Virgin Mary is connected with this Rosary. There is no service or portion of a service in which these people take the same part as in the Litanies. They seem always to attend on occasions when the Litanies are expected ; and it appeared to me, that there was generally some festa, or some scene, or some show, with which the Litanies were connected. At all events, the lower classes usually attended in considerable numbers : and they joined in the responses with great life and spirit. They were generally led by a large number of monks and confraternity-men ; and the whole body of the congregation joined these in a manner that was extremely pleasing, and would put to shame the

cold and lifeless way in which the responses are uttered in the churches of England. The *Ora pro nobis* would burst from the lips of many hundreds with great power, and give a most pleasing effect to the service. If one could but separate this *ora pro nobis*, as sung by so many voices—the voices of a whole congregation, from the objects to whom it is addressed, I do not know of any religious service more pleasing, or more really like the response of a worshipping people.

The nature of these Litanies is little known to the vast portion of the people of England. As one example, I will here add one to an individual saint. It is “The Litany to the holy warrior and Martyr Florian,” and begins as usual:—

“Lord ! have mercy upon us.

“Christ ! have mercy upon us.

* * * * *

“Holy Mary, *pray for us, (Ora pro nobis.)*

“St. Florian, courageous soldier of Christ, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, unconquered Martyr of Christ, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, despiser of the world, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, mirror and pattern of Soldiers, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, ornament of Austria, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, valiant Captain, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, on account of the successes of thy forty soldiers, wert full of cares, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who broughtest thy comrades to martyrdom by thine exhortations, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who didst offer thyself to the governor of Aqualino, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who offered thyself to death for Christ, and willingly bore it, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who confessed the faith of Christ with loud voice, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, for this confession, wert slain, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, whose shoulders were branded and lacerated with hot irons, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who remained stedfast in the faith under most dreadful suffering, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, bound hands and feet, and with millstones about the neck, wert thrown into the Enns, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who passing through fire and water, didst enter the land of eternal life, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who art crowned in heaven, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, in the presence of God will bloom to all eternity, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, whose body was by an unseen power saved from the river, and deposited on a rock, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, whose body an eagle protected and shewed to the Christians, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who wast taken and buried by Valeria and other pious women, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who by a miraculous spring of water refreshed the oxen who were half dead from want of water, while conveying thy holy body to the grave, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who obtained from God for this well such powers that the sick were healed by it, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, after thy burial, didst immediately raise the dead body of another to life, *pray for us.*

“St. Florian, who, when invoked by a man who had fallen on burning coals, restored him uninjured, *pray for us.*

“ St. Florian, powerful protector against fire, *pray for us.*

“ Thou Lamb of God ! that takest away the sin of the world, spare us, O Lord !

* * * * *

“ Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

“ Hail Mary, full of grace, &c.

“ O Holy Florian, thou valiant champion of Christ, who left thy honourable career of arms to give thyself for the sake of the faith to such cruel martyrdom and torment, recommend us to the Lord our God ; Pray for us, O Holy Martyr Florian, that we may be graciously preserved from the effect of fire.

“ Most glorious Martyr of Christ, Holy Florian, who didst remain so constant and unmoved in faith and love, that no flattery of words or torments could turn thee from the true service of God : We implore thee with great humility, that thou, *through thy great merits and intercession*, wouldst obtain for us from the Most Gracious God, help in trouble, consolation in persecution, refreshment in difficulties, and support in temptations, that we may perceive all the evils of the devil, that we may escape his snares, that we may fly from the sins of the world, that we may despise worldly honours, that we may fear no opposition, that we may overcome the temptations of the flesh, that we may constantly practise virtue, and lastly, through thine intercession, obtain and enjoy eternal happiness and blessedness. Amen.

This remarkable Litany, on the absurdities of which it is unnecessary to comment, may serve as an example of those which are addressed to particular Saints in the church of Rome. It may serve also as an answer to those

apologists, who assert that though she prays *through the intercession*, yet that she does not pray *through the merits* of the Saints. The words are “through thy great merits and intercession.”

I obtained this Litany in the following manner. In one of the churches in Bavaria I opened the books of services that were lying on the altar. Among them was this remarkable Litany, with which I was so struck, that a translation seemed desirable, and it is thus published for the information of the Protestants of England.

The religious feeling and devotion of many of the Romans is very visible, even to the mere stranger sojourning among them. Individuals may be found, in all classes, whose sense of religious obligation is deep and profound. Their ideas, however, of what constitutes religious duty, are very different indeed from those which influence the same classes in England, and therefore they exhibit their devotion in a different manner from what would be appreciated in England. The result is, that the complexions of the religion of Rome, and of the religion of England, are as widely different as it is possible to imagine. Mahometanism and Christianity are not more unlike, in their external aspect, than are the religion of Rome and that of England. But that there is earnest zeal and profound devotion among many of the Romans, especially of the lower classes, is as certain as that there is the most gross and absurd superstition among them. And if it be the latter that leads them to their peculiar modes of worship, it is to the former we ought in all charity to ascribe the zeal, and spirit, and life with which they join in the *Ora pro nobis*, and the other responses of their Litanies.

CHAPTER X.

RELICS : AND THEIR EXHIBITION.

RELICS—NATURAL FEELING IN THEIR FAVOUR—FIRST CAUTION RESPECTING THEM—CATALOGUE OF THE RELICS OF SANTE CROCE—OF THE RELICS OF ST. PRAXEDE—THE MANY HEADS AND ARMS ATTRIBUTED TO SOME SAINTS—RELICS AT ST. APOLLINARIO—OTHER REMARKABLE RELICS—SECOND CAUTION RESPECTING THEM—THEIR AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTITY—THE CATACOMBS—THE BRAZEN SERPENT—THE BODIES OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL—THE PICTURE OF OUR LORD—THE HANDKERCHIEF OF ST. VERONICA—THE TABLE AT WHICH THE LAST SUPPER WAS EATEN. “THE EXHIBITION OF RELICS” AT ST. PETER’S DESCRIBED—THE POPE AND CARDINALS PROSTRATE BEFORE THEM—“THE EXHIBITION OF RELICS” AT SANTE CROCE, DESCRIBED—“THE PROCESSION OF RELICS” AT ST. GREGORY’S DESCRIBED—VARIOUS INSTANCES OF RELICS EXHIBITED FOR WORSHIP.

CHAPTER X.

RELICS : AND THEIR EXHIBITION.

I KNOW not how it was, but there were few things connected with the religious feeling and devotion in the Church of Rome, that had so much interested me as those connected with the relics of the saints. Before I had contemplated my pilgrimage, it was long a matter of curiosity as well as of interest. I had read and heard so much respecting relics—I had observed the powerful hold with which, as by a spell, they seemed to charm the minds of many—I had seen the deep and almost awful devotion of some as they gazed on these treasured and sacred things, and I wished to become acquainted with the secret of their power. And besides this, I had ever observed in the writings of Protestant controversialists and in the details of Protestant travellers, so much scorn and ridicule poured out upon this item of Roman belief and Roman practice—so much of a sceptical or unbelieving spirit exhibited in the treatment of the whole question respecting it—so much of unseemliness and irreverence and almost profaneness seemingly interwoven with it, as if it were the veriest perfection of folly, superstition and imposture, that I felt a

tendency to enlist at least some of my feelings in favour of that which was denounced with so unsparing and unmitigated hostility. At all events there was scarcely a single feature in the religion of Rome on which I had previously felt more curiosity; and it formed no inconsiderable item in the motives which induced me to undertake my pilgrimage to Rome.

A regard for relics seems almost a part of our nature. We cherish those relics which are memorials of those we have loved. We prize those relics which remind us of the illustrious dead. We value those relics which call to mind the names of those whose genius, or learning, or patriotism we have admired. Who would not cherish the relics of Homer and of Demosthenes,—of Virgil and of Cicero? Who would not prize the javelin of Alexander, or the sword of Cæsar? Who would not value the papers of Milton, or the pens of Shakespeare? There is a something in our nature which calls forth a love for all the little memorials of the illustrious and the mighty of by-gone ages, and we pride ourselves, though perhaps we cannot analyse or account for the feeling, on the possession of any relic connected with them. But, general as is this tendency of the human heart in reference to the remains of the great and the mighty of the past, it is still more general, indeed universal, in reference to the memorials of those whom we have admired, and loved, and whose memory we still cherish and delight in. The companions of our youth and the friends of our age—the parents who have loved us and the children who have clung to us—all these, when the cold hand of death has drawn the mysterious veil and hid them from our weeping eyes, are still loved and still cherished in our affectionate remembrance; and the gifts

of affection received in past times—the tokens of regard presented in happier moments—and all the many nameless things that once belonged to the loved and the lost, are now prized and cherished as the sweet memorials of the virtues, the affections of those loved and lost ones. We cherish those remains for their sakes whose remains they are, and though we may not easily explain the secret of our sympathies, yet the universal experience of men proves the interest felt in relics among mankind.

If a tendency to prize the relics of religion and of religious persons be found to be less general among men, it is perhaps because the love of religion is not so general as the love of our departed friends, and because the love of religious persons is not so congenial to the human heart, as a love of the great and the illustrious of this world's heroes. And it is in a great measure owing to this, that religious relics, or relics of religious persons and religious things, are not so generally prized and cherished among us. And among those persons who are truly religious, and among whom such a love for these cherished memorials of the past might well and reasonably be expected, the feeling has been suppressed and stifled from a consciousness of "the pious frauds" that have been so lavishly practised upon the ignorant and superstitious—a consciousness of the number of impudent attempts to impose fictitious relics upon the world—and finally, from a consciousness of the sad extent to which such love of relics has promoted imposture, superstition and idolatry, among a large portion of the members of the church of Rome.

Still, however, we ought not to confound the evil with the good, or mistake the abuse for the use of these remains and memorials of the departed saints—perhaps our fathers

in the gospel, and certainly our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. The relics of those, who are the destined nobility of the skies—the lofty peerage of the heavens, and who were illustrious for the truest philanthropy and noblest patriotism—these best of civic virtues and loftiest heroism—may well be cherished as memorials of the best and greatest of mankind.

But there are certain cautions that ought to be carefully and strictly observed. In the first place, the alleged relics ought to be such as are proper, suitable, and natural mementos of those of whom they purport being the relics or memorials. In the next place they ought to be certainly known to be the relics—the authentic and true relics which they are asserted to be, or we open a door to every species of imposture. Their exhibition for veneration or worship or adoration shall be considered in its place.

I have somewhat to offer on each of these particulars.

I. The greater portion of the relics exhibited in the church of Rome to the veneration and worship of her members, is composed of two classes. One, being particles of the skulls, bones, skin, teeth, hair, nails, and such-like fragments and splinters of the bodies of the saints, which, according to the common consent of mankind, ought to be left undisturbed in the grave. The other is composed of the instruments of suffering and of death to the martyrs, which should awaken feelings of horror, rather than of veneration.

The best mode of giving a just idea of the relics of Rome, will be by inserting here some of the catalogues exhibited in those churches which are remarkable for the most precious relics.

Among the seven great Basilicas of Rome is the high

church of Santa Croce de Gerusalemme. Near the tribune or chancel may be observed two lists ; one, being a detail of the indulgences and other privileges pertaining to such as worshipped in that church ; the other being a catalogue of the relics contained and exhibited in it.

The catalogue is as follows,

“ Three pieces of the true Cross, deposited by Constantine, and kept in a case of gold and jewels.

The title placed over the Cross, with the writing in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

One of the most holy Nails with which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified.

Two thorns from the crown of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The finger of St. Thomas the apostle, which touched the most holy rib of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

The transverse beam of the cross of the repentant thief.

One of the pieces of money, supposed to be given for the betrayal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The bodies of Saints Cæsarius and Anastasius.

The cord by which our Lord Jesus Christ was bound to the cross.

The sponge that was extended to our Lord with gall and vinegar.

A large piece of the coat of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A large piece of the veil and of the hair of the most holy Virgin.

Some of the clothing of St. John the Baptist.

Portions of the arms of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Some of the ashes of St. Lawrence the martyr.

A vessel of the balm in which the head of St. Vincent was dipped.

Some earth from Mount Calvary, saturated with the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A phial full of the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A phial full of milk of the most blessed Virgin Mary.

A piece of the sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A piece of Mount Calvary.

A piece of the place where Christ was smitten.

A piece of a stone from the place where Christ was born.

A piece of the stone where the angel stood at the annunciation to the most holy Virgin.

A fragment from the house of the most holy Virgin.

A fragment from the house where our Lord was sitting, when He pardoned Mary Magdalen.

A piece of the stone where our Lord sat after having fasted.

A piece of the stone where Christ wrote the words given through Moses on Sinai.

A piece of the spot whence our Lord ascended to heaven.

A piece of the stone of the grave of Lazarus.

A fragment from the place where the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ was found.

A piece of the stone from where repose St. Peter and St. Paul.

Some of the cotton in which was collected the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of the manna with which God fed the Israelites in the wilderness.

Some relics of eleven prophets.

A portion of the rod of Aaron that budded.

A part of the head of John the Baptist.

A part of the head of Clement, Pope and martyr.

Some relics of Praxedes, Virgin and martyr.

Some of the skin and hair of St. Catherine of Sienna.

A tooth of St. Peter.

A tooth of St. Giordon.

Some bones of St. John the Baptist.

Some relics of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Some bones of Bartholomew the Apostle.

Some relics of St. James the Apostle.

Some bones of the holy Innocents.

A portion of the thigh of St. Lawrence.

A portion of the shoulder of Bragius, Bishop and martyr.

Some bones of St. Fabian, St. Sebastian, and *St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Some bones of St. Hippolitus, Agapetus, Epiphanius, Dionysius.

Some relics of Saints Cosmo and Damian, martyrs, and of St. Urban, Pope,

Some relics of Pope Sixtus.

A knee of St. Giordon, martyr.

Some bones of St. Nicholas the Bishop.

Some relics of Saints Somnus, Regulus, Nereus, Ernute, Benedict, Hilarion.

A stone from the house of St. Peter the Apostle.

A stone from the place where reposes St. Catherine, the virgin and martyr.

Some bones of Mary Magdalen.

Some bones of Saints Petronilla, Anastasia, Potusiana, Agnes, Euphemia.

Some relics of St. Elizabeth, Queen and widow,

Some relics of Saints Bridget, Galian, Felicite, Catherine, and Margaret, the virgins and martyrs.

Some relics of the eleven thousand martyrs.

An hundred and thirty-seven cases of other relics of Saints, both male and female, whose names antiquity has not distinguished.

An image of the Pieta in mosaic, found among the relics in the reliquary which belonged to Pope Gregory."

I copied this list or catalogue of relics, from the place where it was suspended in the Basilica of Santa Croce de Gerusalemme—the Church of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem, between the altar and the choir-chapel. The first five relics were formally exhibited by the Bishop, in a scene which shall be described among the examples of the exhibition of relics. The others were neatly arranged in a large case, divided into numberless small compartments, and placed on the high altar where all might see them. I examined them as closely as I could. The hundred and thirty-seven cases of unknown relics, must prove a most convenient treasure, in case there should be any disposition or temptation to imposture. As fast as the known relics are disposed of, there will be no difficulty in supplying their place, by any one of these, which will soon be known by appending to it a label with some name of a favourite saint like all the others ; and it will serve the purpose as well as the rest.

There is another remarkable catalogue of relics exhibited in the Church of St. Praxede. On ascending the steps to the chancel—steps that are formed of the largest and most superb *rosso antico* to be seen in Rome—this catalogue may be seen engraved on the marble, in black letters on the white marble of the approach to the altar. It was as follows on one side of the altar.

“ A tooth of St. Peter.

A tooth of St. Paul.

Some relics of Ananias, the apostle.

Some relics of St. Terence.

The chemise of the blessed Virgin Mary.

The girdle of our Lord Jesus Christ.

An arm of St. Philip.

The rod of Moses.

An arm of St. Barnabas.

Some of the earth on which our Lord prayed in his agony.

An arm of St. Severinus, the martyr.

Some relics of St. Benedict, the Abbot.

Some relics of St. Saba, the Abbot.

Some relics of St. Gall, the Abbot.

Some relics of four martyrs.

Some relics of St. Constantia, the daughter of the Emperor.

The veil of St. Agatha.

The reed and sponge given to our Lord with the gall and vinegar.

The heads of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Some relics of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.

The thigh of St. Alexis.

The arm of St. Sebastian.

The arm of St. Columban.

The arm of St. Nicolas.

The sepulchre of the blessed Virgin Mary.

The picture of our Lord presented to Pudens by St. Peter.

Some relics of John the Baptist.

The towel with which our Lord wiped the feet of the disciples.

The swaddling-clothes of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The coat without seam belonging to our Lord.

Three thorns of the crown of thorns."

On the other side of the altar is the following.

"Some relics of St. Zacharias, the father of the Baptist.

The head of Bartholomew the apostle.
Some relics of Luke the Evangelist.
The stone with which the first martyr Stephen was killed.
Some relics of St. James.
An arm of Fabian, the martyr.
Some relics of Nicholas, the Bishop.
Some relics of Maurice, the Abbot.
Some relics of Ephraim, the Monk.
The cloak of St. Francis.
Some relics of St. Thomas Aquinas.
Some relics of St. Bernard.
Some relics of the eleven thousand virgins.
The cloak of the Virgin Catherine.
The cloak of the Virgin Clara.
The cloak of Paulina, the Virgin and Martyr.
The tomb of the blessed Virgin Mary.
The arms of Saints Stephen and Lawrence, the martyrs.
The knees of Pope Gregory.
The head of Luke, the evangelist.
An arm of St. Matthew, the evangelist.
The head of Paulina, the Virgin and martyr.
An arm of Praxes, the martyr.
The sponge with which Praxede collected the blood of
the martyrs.
Fragments of the Cross of St. Andrew.
Fragments of the reed which they gave to our Lord.
Some of the sepulchre of our Lord.
Four pieces of the true cross."

Such was the list or catalogue of relics in the church of St. Praxede. It was graven in black letters upon the white marble of the steps approaching the altar, and was there as

prominent and conspicuous as the Lord's Prayer, or the Ten Commandments in an English Church, except that the characters were smaller. I was so amused—for all reverence was at once banished as I read the details,—at some of these relics, that I asked the Sacristan or Official of the church, to admit me to a private examination of them. He stated that it was impossible to do so at that moment, as there were too many persons in the Church, who would crowd to inspect them. He soon however came to terms with me, and we arranged that I should call the next day at an hour which he named, and at which no one would be in the church, and he would satisfy me fully. I kept my appointment. We locked ourselves within the church; we repaired to the treasury and unlocked it. I held the list or catalogue in my hand, and called for each relic in succession; and I was thus enabled to subject every one of them to as close an inspection as I could desire.

This inspection removed some difficulties from my mind, I had observed that St. Peter and St. Paul were said to be buried in St. Peter's—also that their two heads are said to be again at St. John's of Lateran, where I have seen them exhibited—also that their two heads are again said to be among the relics at St. Praxede; and I marvelled how these Apostles could have two heads at St. Peter's—two more at St. John's—and two again at St. Praxede's, being not less than three heads for each Apostle. I had observed that the cloak or coat of our Lord was among the relics at Santa Croce, and yet was also among the relics at St. Praxede's, at the very time when its exhibition at Treves was creating a second reformation in Germany! I had observed that some saints had two or three heads in various places, and four or five arms was no unusual allotment

to some special favorites. I found however on inspecting these relics, and examining some others afterwards, that they have not the heads, but only splinters of the heads ; and not the arms, but only minute fractions of the bones of the arm ; and not the veil of St. Agatha, or the coat of our Lord, or the chemise of Mary ; but only some little thread or shred of these things, or of something said to be these things ; and thus the prodigious display of precious relics, dwindles into that which only excites a smile at the absurdity, or awakens compassion at the folly, or elicits indignation at the imposture of the system. I have seen no less than eight of the thorns from the crown of thorns, and the three which are at St. Praxedes's, I was able to examine. They were in a small glass case, and very neatly set, each being about *three inches long*, and as well as I could judge, (for I could not feel them through the glass,) they were made of iron !

There are other catalogues of relics very similar to the foregoing, to be found in St. Peter's and in other places. In many churches there are prodigious numbers exhibited on certain festivals, with little labels on each. I think it was in the little church of St. George, the only church of the Patron Saint of England, that I saw exhibited and labelled the largest collection of relics, but there was not any authorised catalogue. In the magnificent church of S. Apollinario in Classe, on the skirts of the celebrated forest of pines near Ravenna, there is an inscription in very large characters in these words :

“ Enclosed in this holy image of the cross, the relics of the wood of the true cross of our Lord are adored ; also some relics of the stone of the holy sepulchre, also some relics of the bones of the twelve apostles ; and fragments

of other bodies, the glory and protection of this city of Ravenna."

There is also the following catalogue affixed to the walls.

"A catalogue of the most remarkable bones of the most holy body of St. Apollinarius, deposited under the great altar of this Basilica :

"Seven pieces of his skull—Five of those pieces sprinkled with his blood—Four pieces of his holy head—A portion of one jaw-bone—Eight of his white teeth—Two bones of his shoulder—Four bones of his arm—Seven bones of the fingers of his hand—Two of the toes of his feet—Three of his vertebræ—Twenty bones of his ribs—Two pieces of the bones of his thighs—Two pieces of his knees—Two pieces of his legs—Also many other bones, some whole and some broken."

These catalogues will answer as examples of the many lists of relics, exhibited in many of the churches of Rome. They are too tedious and uninteresting to transcribe here, the foregoing are sufficient to illustrate them. They are publicly and authoritatively set forth, if not in tables of brass, certainly in tables of marble or in printed forms, suspended beside the altar, or inserted in the walls of the church. There they remain, exhibited before the eyes of the worshippers, with as much publicity and authority as it is possible to give them ; so that at times while looking upon them, I have felt a gush of thankfulness at the contrast presented by our churches of England, where *the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments*, or some sentence of Holy Scripture, always meet the eye of the worshipper, instead of *a long list of the bones and other relics of the dead*, said to be contained in the treasury of the church.

But these lists are far from containing all the relics of Rome. In St. Peter's they exhibit the pillar of the temple of Jerusalem, against which our Lord leaned when he taught in the temple, and others will be noticed when describing the exhibition at St. Peter's. As a rival to this, they exhibit at St. Praxede's, the column to which our Lord was bound when he was scourged at the command of Pilate. This latter exhibits some taste on the part of the scourgers, if it be authentic, for it is composed of one of the rarest marbles in the world, a green and white jasper; it is erected in a small chapel of its own, kept in deep darkness, and into this chapel no woman is allowed to enter, according to an inscription at its entrance. At the church of St. Bibiana, which is said to be built over the bodies of 11,266 martyrs *senza donne e fanciulli*, without women and children, and so proclaimed on a marble tablet in its portico, though the whole church would not hold half that number of skulls; there is exhibited the column to which she was bound when scourged to death, the column being marked by the rope, and still red with her blood, to prove its authenticity! In S. Giovanni di Laterano, there is a table at which our Lord instituted the last supper, with his disciples: and at the church of S. Pudentia, they shew the table at which St. Peter celebrated the Lord's Supper in the house of Pudens; while in the Mamertine prison they point to the altar, at which St. Peter said mass while in prison! In these prisons, which are under the Capitol, they shew a stone, covered with a grating to preserve it, and presenting a hollow on the surface. It is stated that as St. Peter descended into the prison, a soldier struck him so violently as to knock his head against this stone, leaving the impression of his head on it! They also shew

a slab of marble, on which as an altar Peter said mass, and having converted the Jailor, a spring of water sprung miraculously in the prison, in order to his being baptized. They therefore shew a hollow in the floor of the prison, as the site of the miraculous spring. As the prison has been fitted and consecrated as a chapel, the inscriptions setting forth these things may be regarded as in some degree authoritative.

At Milan they shew the whole skeleton of St. Carlo Borromeo, in his gorgeous robes, within a case of crystal, and a vast supply of the teeth, nails, hair, and bits of skin of the Apostles, preserved in little glass phials. At Perugia they have the ring—the wedding-ring of the Virgin Mary, kept under twelve locks, the keys being held by twelve different persons, the authorities of the city. In the church of S. Pietro di Vincoli at Rome, they shew the chains that had bound St. Peter when in the prison, and which were miraculously broken by the angel. In short it would occupy a volume, to catalogue the various articles, said to be relics, in the possession of the Church of Rome. There are some however which I shall have occasion especially to mention hereafter, in connection with St. Peter's. I have myself a piece of the cloak of Joseph, the husband of Mary, with the archbishop's seal and verification of its authenticity, as well as permission for its worship!

A view and careful examination of the relics—I must honestly confess it—not only confirmed every suspicion previously entertained, but seemed to me to establish beyond a doubt the very worst I had ever read, charging the system with folly, with imposture and superstition, so as completely to annihilate every feeling in my mind that could previously have found an apology for the system. I

had hoped for better things, but the disappointment was complete.

A consideration of these relics cannot but suggest a great variety of reflections to minds of differing characters. A bottle of the milk of the Virgin Mary will suggest a feeling of disgust at the coarseness or indecency of those who manufacture it, rather than of reverence. A bottle of the blood of Jesus Christ will excite a feeling of horror at those who could practise so sacrilegious an imposture, rather than one of devotion. A piece of the chemise of the Virgin Mary will create no other sensation than a feeling of indignation, at the indelicacy of the monks and friars who handle it. The transverse beam of the cross of the thief crucified with our Lord, is more likely to elicit a smile at its absurdity, than a feeling of veneration for the wood. While the abiding conviction on the mind of every man—every man without exception—that all are gross, impudent, and audacious impostures, especially the bottle of the milk of Mary, and the bottle of the blood of Christ, must give rise to the most distressing and painful feelings.

But, supposing all these relics be indeed the relics they profess to be—supposing they are assumed to be, in the absence of all absolute testimony to the contrary, all that the priests of Rome would represent them—all written on the little slips of paper attached to each, like the names on mineral and chemical specimens in our museums : and all ensured to be veritable and authentic by an official seal of some archbishop or bishop appended by a thread to the same—supposing all thus attested to be true ; yet the exhibition of such relics as the foregoing catalogues supply, is calculated to awaken, at least with some persons, feelings very different indeed from those of reverence and devotion.

This is especially applicable to the bones, or rather to the minute fractions of the bones exhibited as relics. It is not easy for a rational man, and much less easy for a christian man, to kneel in reverence and devotion to the tooth of St. Peter, or to the jaw-bone of St. Apollinarius—to the thigh of St. Alexis, or to the knee of Pope Gregory—to the finger of St. Thomas, or to the arm of St. Sebastian—to the ribs of one saint, or to the vertebræ of another; and yet each and all of these, I have myself seen. It seems a sacred feeling, universal among all the tribes of the human family, to leave the bones of the dead in the quiet tranquillity of the grave—to leave them there in peace, and to allow no rude hand to disturb their long and their silent slumbers. This feeling, even with the most enlightened and educated, is carried quite as far as with the simple and the ignorant, and often prevails to an almost superstitious extent. We are unwilling to violate the graves of the dead; we tread lightly and carefully among the graves of those we have loved and cherished; we suppress all rude merriment, and speak in whispers among the tombs of our parents, or of our children. And we pause in silence, and respect, and admiration, beside the monuments of the venerable, and the great, and the good. But we allow no rude hand to disturb their bones. It would seem a sort of sacrilege to take their bones, and breaking them with hammers into a thousand splinters, traffick with the little minute fractions, and deposit them in churches, and monasteries, and convents, as if dispersing them on the four winds of heaven. We believe that the truest mode of shewing reverence to the bodies of the dead is to let them rest in peace—to act on the example of the good king Josiah: “He spied the sepulchres that were

there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it. Then he said, What title is that I see? And the men of the city told him, it is the sepulchre of the Man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el. Then he said, Let him alone, LET NO MAN MOVE HIS BONES :—so they let his bones alone.” 2 Kings xxiii.

16. When this good king would shew respect and reverence for the departed prophet of the Lord, he commanded that his bones should be undisturbed ; while he shewed his determination to defile and pollute the sacred places of the idolaters, by strewing among them the bones of the dead, he would not permit the bones of the prophet to be touched. “ Let him alone, Let no man move his bones.” If the Church of Rome would shew a true reverence for the departed saints, she ought to let their bones alone in their graves ; she ought to send forth the proclamation—LET NO MAN MOVE THEIR BONES. At all events, I can say for myself, that even if I could believe all the bones which I have seen,—and I have seen at least a thousand such relics,—to be the veritable bones of those saints and martyrs which they are alleged to be, they would yet create, as they have ever created, a feeling of distress and disgust, at the thought of seeing the bones of those noblest of human heroes, the faithful martyrs of Jesus, broken into splinters, no larger at times than a pin or a nail, and scattered through the world to be made objects of religious devotion. And still more has every feeling of manly delicacy been offended at the sight of young girl’s bones—virgin martyrs for the faith of Christ—rudely and savagely pilfered from the grave, and indelicately and indecently exhi-

bited by laughing monks and bloated friars, to the eyes of the world; hammered into minute splinters, to promote superstition among the people, and to produce offerings for the priesthood. The worms of the grave, preying on the flesh of the dead, eke out a horrid existence from the rotteness of the tomb; and are rivalled only by the monks and friars of Rome, who feed and fatten on the wealth extracted from the bones of the dead.

There is another class of relics—relics too, which are regarded often with a more especial devotion—of which it may be said, that they are wholly unsuitable to be made the objects of devotion or veneration. If some beloved one has been poisoned, we should never think of cherishing and loving, as a relic, a portion of the poison by which she had perished. If some chosen friend has fallen in his country's battles, we never dream of searching for the sword that smote him, to preserve with fondness and love as a pleasing memento of his virtues. The instruments of suffering or of death to those we loved, are regarded naturally with dislike and hatred, rather than with fondness and regard. And so too with respect to the instruments of sorrow, of suffering, and of death, to the saints and martyrs of Christianity. The very sight of them awakens feelings of hatred and loathing, rather than feelings of love and veneration. The thorns that pierced the brows of our Lord—the nails that pierced his hands and feet—the spear that entered his side—the cross on which St. Andrew died—the stone that killed St. Stephen—the scourge that scourged our Lord :—These all are relics, even if authentic, more calculated to excite repugnance than reverence. There are others,—as a piece of one of the stones of the house of the Virgin Mary, a fragment of the seat on which our

Lord sat when forgiving Mary Magdalen, a fraction of the place where our Lord was scourged, a splinter of the stone where the Angel stood when announcing his message to the Virgin ; a piece of the stone on which our Lord rested, after his forty days' fasting on the Mount ; a fragment from the spot whence our Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives ; these all are relics that may very reasonably awaken a smile, as, even if true, they are but objects of curiosity rather than of devotion ; but the thorns that pierced the brows of Christ ; the cross on which Andrew died ; the stone that killed Stephen ; should be, if true and authentic, objects of dislike and abhorrence, rather than of veneration and devotion.

On the whole, therefore, it may be observed, that the relics preserved in the churches of Rome, whether authentic or not, have nothing in them to answer that love of memorials of the dead, which is so natural among men. They may awaken a smile at their absurdity—a repugnance at their uses—or a shudder at their sacrilegiousness ; but never, in a single instance, did they excite in my breast, a feeling of reverence or devotion. This may have arisen from some defect in my spiritual state, and if so, I pray that God may forgive me. But I am bound to state the fact.

II. But as was intimated already, there was a second caution to be carefully observed in this matter of relics, namely, that they should be certainly known to be the relics—the true or authentic relics—which they are asserted to be. This caution deserves to be considered.

If money can be procured by the sale of bones or other things under the name of relics—if offerings can be obtained for certain altars, shrines, convents, &c., from their being supposed to contain precious relics—if influence over

a credulous or superstitious people can be gained by claiming the possession of certain relics, then there is a possibility at least, that the temptations to cupidity might prove temptations to imposture. If any dependence can be placed on the records of history, this possibility has proved a very reality, and men have worshipped the skull of a heathen when they supposed they were worshipping the skull of a christian; have prostrated themselves before the bones of malefactors when they imagined themselves kneeling before the bones of saints; and were breathing invocations to souls in hell, when they imagined themselves invoking the prayers of the spirits in heaven. In this matter of relics, imposture has done its work.

In the church of S. Croce di Gerusalemme, there were found many cases of bones. There was also a considerable supply labelled with the names of various saints, and those cases seem to have been the stock from which these were selected and ticketed, so that as those already labelled went off, their place could be easily and immediately supplied, and ample bones were at hand in case of anything new being required for the market. I have seen some of these, and the chests of bones are described as "an hundred and thirty-seven cases of relics of saints, both male and female, *whose names antiquity has not distinguished.*" How these bones, these apocryphal relics, are ascertained to be the relics of male and female saints, is not divulged, but it is more than probable that the bones, originally collected from the catacombs, had been taken from the cases whenever they were wanted, and labelled and named after any saint according to convenience.

The great mine from which the relics are extracted, is, avowedly, the catacombs of Rome. In these vast recep-

tacles of the dead, the heathen Romans buried their slaves and poorer classes for ages. They were the vast charnel-houses where they buried thousands, and they proved also in after-times, an asylum where the Christians of the primitive ages sought to hide themselves from the eyes of their persecutors; and where many a faithful follower of Jesus, after being "persecuted, afflicted, tormented," closed his eyes and slept the sleep of death. There can exist no doubt that the bones of many a one, whose life shone "like the light of the morning, shining more and more to the perfect day," and who is now "shining with the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever," lie mouldering into dust amidst the damp, dark, and dreary receptacles of these catacombs. But certainly there must exist great doubt as to the means by which we may satisfactorily discern between the bones of a saint and the bones of a sinner,—the relics of a heathen, and the relics of a Christian, which have lain buried and mouldering there for ages.

The authenticity of relics is a subject widely distinct from their worship or veneration. If indeed the object of the church be merely to awaken devotion in the simple and ignorant—the object frankly avowed to me by many intelligent persons—then the authenticity of the relics is comparatively unimportant, so long as there is credulity among the simple and ignorant; but if the object be to obtain the favour, protection, or intercession of the saints, whose bones are supposed to be venerated, then indeed it becomes a matter of some importance, that the bones should really be the relics of the saint contemplated, instead of the remains of some idolatrous heathen, or even some animal, as may not unfrequently be the case.

In the church of St. Ambrose at Milan, they shew, among other relics, *the brazen serpent* that Moses had made and elevated in the wilderness. It is two or three feet in length, and is placed on the top of a marble pillar, of eight or ten feet in height. It is generally regarded by the people as a most authentic relic of antiquity ; and being placed in the body of that magnificent temple, so as to be seen by all who enter, it has become an object of much religious veneration, far more than justifiable, even if its authenticity were undoubted. The Sacristan called our attention very especially to it, speaking of it as the very serpent that Moses had made. I looked at it very intently, and wondered in my heart, how men could so wickedly attempt, in such a sacred place, and on so solemn a subject, to impose upon the people. I could not refrain from asking him, whether indeed he thought it authentic, and whether it was the veritable serpent that Moses had made, or only a copy of it. He replied with caution, "*non è certo*" "It is not certain!" My wife was present and said, that it could not be the original serpent, inasmuch as it is expressly stated in the scriptures, that king Hezekiah had purposely broken it in pieces, to prevent the people from worshipping it. He made some confused answer, and changed the subject.

And yet this pretended relic has been preserved in this Church for many centuries : and thousands, through many successive generations, have regarded it with religious veneration. It was originally presented to the Church by Archbishop Arnulph, in the eleventh century. It was presented by him, as the true and veritable serpent itself ; it was accepted as such, and placed publicly in the Church, as such, for the veneration of the devout. The authorities

of the Church have lent to it their sanction : the traditions of past centuries have invested it with reverence, and the sons and daughters of many generations have honoured it with religious honours : and of the multitudes who daily look on it, there are scarcely any, except the enlightened few who have burst the trammels that bind their fellows, who do not regard it as an authentic relic of Moses. And yet the fact stated in Scripture, that Hezekiah had broken it in pieces, to prevent its being worshipped, proves the absolute fiction of the whole matter. But the perfect ignorance of the sacred scriptures—an ignorance scarcely conceivable, as well as the disregard of their divine authority so prevalent in Italy, deprives this fact of all its weight among the people.

Another and more striking illustration was presented at Rome. The bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul are said to be deposited under the high altar of the great church of St. Peter's. In order that due veneration may be paid to these precious relics, there are stairs in the centre of the Church, descending below the altar ; and some thirty or forty splendid lamps, burning day and night to their honour. Here I have seen the pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, and all classes kneel and pay their devotions to the bodies,—the dead bodies of the saints ; and here I have seen them descend with chaunting and with incense to honour these precious relics, till all were wrapped in one cloud of incense. At Rome it would be regarded as the climax of unbelief, to entertain the least doubt as to the presence of these bodies in this place, though the ablest antiquarians have doubted and denied it. To doubt whether Peter or Paul had ever lived, would not be regarded as more heretical, than to doubt that their bodies are there deposited.

I went, accompanied by many others, into the grotto or subterranean chapels, which constitute the vaults on which St. Peter's is built. We were conducted by the Sacristan to the altar, which is said to contain the bodies of the two martyred Apostles. It is directly under the great high altar of the upper church; and there in the darkness of that subterranean chapel, these two Apostles were said to sleep their sleep of death. The Sacristan with much reverence called our attention to the spot, and I asked him whether it was indeed certain—whether, inasmuch as learned antiquarians have doubted, and even denied it, it had ever been clearly ascertained by ocular search, that the remains of St. Peter and St. Paul, were indeed deposited there. He replied that there was no doubt of the fact, and that they certainly were there. My wife reminded him that the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul were said to be in the church of St. John of Lateran, and that we had seen them exhibited there in public; and she asked how they could also be in St. Peter's. He replied that it was indeed very true, that *the heads* of the Apostles were at St. John's, but that *the bodies* were at St. Peter's. My wife again reminded him, that in some other churches we had seen the arms and legs of the Apostles: and suggested that they could not without unnatural multiplication be also in St. Peter's. He replied that it was very true that *the arms and legs*, &c. were in other churches; but that *the bodies* were certainly in St. Peter's where we now stood. I then took occasion myself to ask, whether the whole bodies, without the heads, arms, and legs were there, for that I had seen some of the ribs, shoulders, vertebræ, exhibited in other churches. He answered still that the bodies were beneath the altar, beside which we were then stand-

ing. I suggested to him that there could only be some parts or portion of the bodies, as other parts and portions were claimed elsewhere. He admitted in reply that such was the case, and that it was not the bodies, but *only some fractions of the bodies*, that were buried beneath St. Peter's ! I then again asked whether it was possible to see them, and whether any one had searched and found them,—an easy matter if really contained in that altar, and an easy way of confuting all gainsayers. I placed my hand on the altar and repeated my question, in a manner free from mere scepticism or irreverence ; and he replied that, though they had searched for them yet they had never found them, because they were buried so deep—too deep to find them. They were "*molto profondo*," very deep in the earth ! I thought the difficulty of finding them could be more easily solved, by supposing their absence,—that they had never been there. This conversation passed in the presence of at least a dozen persons, and it shews how very slender are the claims to authenticity, on the part of some of their most valued relics.

But an extraordinary instance of deliberate, premeditated imposition upon this subject, and one almost beyond belief, came under my view in a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was said to have been miraculously made by our Lord, and presented by Him to St. Peter—that St. Peter presented it to Pudens, who left it on his death to his daughter ; and this invaluable relic is preserved in the church of Saint Praxedes. It is so highly esteemed that it is presented to the eyes of the faithful, only on some of the most solemn occasions or high festivals of the Church : and then only in the hands of the Bishop, and when so presented, the people kneel and devoutly venerate the relic.

It is held however at so great a distance from the eyes of the worshippers, that they can discern neither form, nor colour, nor feature, and are compelled to leave all to the imagination.

I was anxious to see and examine this miraculous picture; so I gave a sufficient gratuity to the Sacristan, who conducted me privately to the place where the relics were preserved. Among many other extraordinary things was this picture, which I eagerly seized and carefully examined. It appeared to be a piece of soiled or discoloured canvas, with a sheet of tinsel like gold laid over it, out of which tinsel was cut the outline of the head, so as to give the appearance as if the face was painted on a gold ground. But features I could discover none. I examined it by daylight, I examined it by candle-light, I examined it with a glass, I examined it without a glass; I subjected it to every possible test, but all was blank. There were no eyes—no nose—no mouth—no chin—no hair—no anything. It appeared as if this portrait of our Lord, once miraculously impressed on the canvas, had now entirely disappeared. It appeared as if my heretical eyes could not see it,—as if more faith than was given me was required to believe in its existence,—as if every trace or lineament of a portrait had vanished the moment I touched it. It seemed to my eyes nothing but a scrap of dirty linen, filling up the opening cut in the tinsel in the form of a face, and without one line or one feature naturally belonging to the “human face divine.” And I felt at the moment that many a devout Romanist would attribute this to some miraculous evanescence of the portrait on account of my unbelief. I felt this so strongly that it was with some caution I communicated my impression to the Sacris-

tan, who quietly answered that the picture was so old that it had utterly faded away, so that no colouring whatever had remained upon the canvas. The truth is, that the whole relic is an audacious fiction, clumsily got up to increase the interest attached to the church which claims it; and to awaken the superstitious veneration of an ignorant and blinded populace. What are we to think of the priests and the bishops, that lend themselves to a fraud like this, at the altar of their God and at the most solemn festival of their church!

Another instance of imposture—an imposture too, connected with a likeness of our Lord, is the foolish and fanciful legend of the handkerchief of Veronica. The story is as follows: When our Lord was being dragged to the place of his crucifixion, he was much oppressed with heat, and perspired profusely. A young woman, whose name was Veronica, observing and compassionating his sufferings, presented him with her handkerchief, which our Lord immediately spread over his face and returned to her, with his likeness in that moment of suffering miraculously impressed upon the handkerchief! This handkerchief, with its miraculous portrait, it is asserted, is still in existence, and is preserved in St. Peter's. It is sometimes called *Le Sudata*, on account of its origin; and being accounted one of "the great relics" of Rome, is exhibited on certain principal festivals of the church.

That the whole story is a fiction, there will scarcely be any necessity for proving; the more so, as there never existed any such person as this Veronica; who has been created from rather fanciful elements. Her name is derived from *Vera Ikon*, "the true likeness," and took its rise with some monks, who possessing some portrait of

our Lord, different from similar impostures in the possession of other monks, called their own “the *true likeness*,” to increase its value beyond all others, which, it was insinuated, were impostures. Multitudes of devotees flocked to gaze with reverence, and pour their devotions upon “the true likeness ;” and in process of time, “the true likeness,”—Vera Ikon, was regarded as a saint ; and thus the very designation of the picture has been invested with the forms of a saint !

There is one more instance of imposture, which I have myself witnessed, and which, as it refers to a subject on which few, except the most hardened impostors, would attempt to practice deceit, deserves the more to be mentioned. I allude to the supposed relic of the table at which our Lord sat with his twelve Apostles at the last Passover ; and at which he instituted the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. It is said to be preserved in the Basilica of St. Giovanni di Laterano, and on the baldechino over the high altar of that church, is the following statement in Latin and Italian.

“Near the sacristy is preserved and venerated the great table, at which our Lord supped with his apostles on Holy Thursday, and it remains for the veneration of the faithful on the said Holy Thursday, and on the 21st of December—the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle. Those who venerate the table, acquire many indulgences.”

One of the officials of the church gave me an opportunity for a private inspection of this relic. It was over its whole surface marked by the punctures of nails ; which he accounted for by saying, that it had been profusely ornamented with jewels. So highly had this relic been esteemed during the last century, that offering after offering was

made to it by those, who conceived that they made some reparation for their sins by laying diamonds, pearls, rubies, and other gems upon this table; and so abundant were the offerings, that its whole surface was studded with these brilliant and precious memorials of a strange devotion. Each new offering served as an incentive to others, and the advantage to the priests who possessed the relic, was too evident not to expect that they would encourage so advantageous a devotion. When however the French soldiery had possession of Rome, they professed to think that such precious gems nailed to the table—whereon in poverty and simplicity our Lord and his Apostles partook of the Last Supper,—was a sort of sacrilege not to be permitted; and they therefore restored the table to its original simplicity, by removing and confiscating all the jewels! It is hard to say which,—the Roman monks, or the French soldiers—were the greatest rogues.

This table, however, has now lost its influence among the people. Its miracles were highly esteemed till it was found unable to defend itself from being plundered; and when a second time I saw it publicly exhibited for the veneration of the faithful on Holy Thursday, with candles and all the usual pomp attending such exhibitions, there was only one votary at his devotions before it!

That which proves this table to be an imposture, is its size, which is very small. We read that our Lord sat down with the twelve Apostles on the occasion referred to: and we must suppose the table employed to have been much larger than this exhibited in the church, which is not more than enough for four persons, or six at the utmost! A greater number could not stand, still less sit or recline, at a table so small; but there is nothing too

improbable or impossible for the superstition of Rome during the last century.

And now having given these tiresome and distressing details, I may conclude this part of my subject with stating, that all the interest and curiosity I had once felt in respect to relics was satiated and palled, and that all the kindly feeling and forbearance which I had once felt in reference to the system, knowing it only by theory, was annihilated by an actual vision of its reality. In this matter there is a vast difference between the ideal and the real. I commenced my researches in a spirit of interest and sympathy, prepared to bear with much and to excuse more, in those who loved and honoured the memory of the great and the good ; but I concluded them with a feeling of indignation against a church that could sanction such vile impostures ; and a sense of deep sorrow and compassion for the deluded victims of imposition.

Religious worship, adoration, prayer, belong to the CREATOR ; and it is a dishonouring of Him, who is “a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another,” to render religious worship, adoration or prayer, to the CREATURE. Even if we could suppose that these might, without idolatry, be rendered to the higher and holier of intelligent spirits, yet it would seem inconsistent with common sense—with natural as well as revealed religion—to render them to inanimate and mouldy bones, or rather to portions and splinters of bones, bits of skin, parings of nails, scraps of apparel, or fragments of stones. As such things are incapable of receiving worship, adoration, prayer—as they are incapable of perceiving the prostration of the body, the bending of the knee, the profound reverence, the reli-

gious veneration of men, so such honours ought not to be rendered to them, and indeed cannot be rendered to them, without superstition and idolatry, on the part of those who offer them. And yet I have seen the very same prostration of the body—the very same bending of the knee—the very same profound obeisance—the very same look of devoted reverence—the very same posture of devotion—the very same movement of the lips in prayer, all rendered before a splinter of a bone or a piece of wood, that I have seen the very same person exhibit before the Host on the Altar. I know not, and cannot know, what passes in the minds, or works in the intentions of others; and I, of all men, ought to be the last to judge. I judge not, lest I should myself be judged; and therefore I leave to Him who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, to judge of the minds and intentions of men; but in matters of fact which are before my eyes, I may form an opinion. “I speak that I do know, and testify that I have seen,” when I say that I witnessed the priests at Rome exhibit *the Host*, and the people prostrate themselves before it; and exhibit *an Image*, and the people prostrate themselves before it; and exhibit *a Relic*, and the people prostrate themselves before it. And I never could discover the faintest shade of difference in the posture, in the manner, in the worship of the people; whether to the Host, the Image, or the Relic. The outward act of worship was one and the same to all.

I have taken the opportunity of pressing all this upon those priests, with whom I had the advantage of conferring on theological subjects.

They endeavoured to defend the practice, by drawing a distinction between different kinds of worship; arguing that although the *outward* act was one and the same in

appearance, yet the *inward* intention—the intention in the mind of the worshippers, was different ; so that though to the eye of man the worship seemed the same, yet to the eye of God there was a difference.

I replied, that all this might possibly be true—that we could indeed tell what passed in our own mind, and also what passed before our eyes ; and were therefore justified in forming a decided judgment upon all such things as we so knew and saw. But we of course could not tell what passed in the minds of others ; and therefore neither the priests nor myself—neither Protestant nor Romanist could say what were the intentions of the people, or whether they made these or any other distinctions in their acts of worship. We could only form a judgment of their worship by those external acts which our eyes had witnessed, and are bound to justify or condemn accordingly.

As it is at the formal and public exhibition of relics that this formal and public worship is offered to them, it will be desirable to describe the scene.

And first for the exhibition of Relics at St. Peter's.

In the most conspicuous position in St. Peter's, namely, on the four piles or columns which sustain the stupendous dome, and in the centre of which stands the High Altar, in all its magnificent accompaniments, there may be seen four inscriptions, in letters of gold. These inscriptions have reference to those relics which are called—"The great Relics of St. Peter's." One is over the Image of St. Veronica, and is as follows :—

"That the majesty of the place may guard, becomingly, Veronica's LIKENESS OF THE SAVIOUR,—Urban VIII, chief Pontiff, built and adorned this shrine, in the year of Jubilee, 1625.

Over the Image of St. Helena is another, as follows :—

“THE PORTION OF THE CROSS which the Empress Helena brought from Calvary to this city, Urban VIII, chief Pontiff, took from the Basilica, where it had been, and placed here in the Vatican shrine, adding an altar and an image.”

Over the Image of St. Andrew, is the following inscription :—

“THE SPEAR OF ST. ANDREW, which Pius II. brought from Achaia into the Vatican. Urban VIII, having decorated it with sacred ornaments, and an Image, and the honours of a shrine, willed that it should be venerated (*coli*) here.”

Over the Image of St. Longinus is the following :—

“THE SPEAR OF LONGINUS, which Innocent VIII, chief Pontiff, received from Bajazet, the Sultan of the Turks, Urban VIII. transferred to a decorated shrine, raising an Image, and erecting a shrine underneath.”

Such are the four “Great Relics of St. Peter’s”—the likeness of the Saviour—a portion of the cross—the head of St. Andrew—the spear of St. Longinus. And these four inscriptions may be read in the most conspicuous position that could possibly have been selected in the whole church.

Having ascertained from the *Diario Romano* that November 18th. was the appointed day for the exhibition of these relics before the Pope, Cardinals, and whole court of Rome, I attended at St. Peter’s early. I found five or six Priests saying masses at as many different altars. The congregations averaged about six persons for each altar.

About 11 o’clock, the cardinal, with several attendant priests and other ecclesiastical persons, entered and repaired to the choir-chapel. He soon after commenced robing

to celebrate mass before the Pope. This was accomplished with much ceremony. Six attendant ecclesiastics stood in a line before the altar whereon the robes were deposited, and then each taking from the altar some one article of the robes, and doing reverence, withdrew, and then filing off, they all stood in a line, one before the other, facing the cardinal, who was seated. While they thus waited, other assistant priests disrobed the cardinal of the dress in which he had entered. And then each of the six attendants advancing with the surplice, the tunic, the alb, &c., the cardinal was robed for the Mass. All this was done in the presence of the congregation, and accompanied by music.

When this was completed, the Pope entered the chapel of the Holy Sacrament, by his private entrance from the Vatican. He was preceded by the usual body of official attendants, cardinals, prelates, priests, canons, &c., with the Swiss Guards, and some of the Noble Guards around his person, together with two cardinals holding his train. He was robed in a very long dress of white silk embroidered in gold, and wore a cape or pelerine of crimson silk, reaching nearly to the elbows. He had no mitre, or crown. He walked, thus attended, across the church, and entered the choir-chapel. All persons seemed anxious to see him, only four, however, with some children, knelt as he passed. They were four of the *Sœurs de charité* who had charge of the children. The mass proceeded as usual.

At the conclusion of the mass, the officiating cardinal and priests, with the whole ecclesiastical corps of the church going before them, bearing maces, crosier, lighted candles, incense &c., issued from the choir-chapel, and entering the body of St. Peter's, all knelt in the same form or rank in which the procession had moved. There

were besides these, about thirty priests, canons, &c., robed in purple and white, who all knelt in a line of two and two stretching towards the High Altar. The Pope, then, with the cardinals, prelates and other priests, moved from the choir-chapel and went in procession with the Swiss Guards and the Noble Guard, along the whole kneeling column till he arrived at their head. Then advancing till the Papal procession had ample space to kneel at the head or rather in advance of that which was already kneeling, the Pope knelt at a small stool, which was prepared with carpets, cushions, &c., in the centre of the aisle and fronting the High Altar. There were thus two seemingly independent bodies. One, that of the officiating cardinal, with assistant priests and attendants, being the ecclesiastical corps of the church, about forty in number. And the other, that of the Pope with his cardinals, prelates, and guards, about fifty in number. These all were kneeling. The congregation of spectators, —for they were not worshippers,—all stood, and might have numbered about two hundred persons.

At the same moment the little gallery over the Image of St. Veronica was seen illuminated with several candles, and three priests stood in the midst of them.

A little bell tinkled, and in a moment the central priest was seen holding before him a glass-case elegantly decorated with gold. In this was said to be enclosed the head or point of the spear which pierced the side of our Lord when suspended on the cross. The priest held this for a moment to his left, then to his right, and finally straight before him, and then retired.

The Pope, cardinals, prelates, &c., were all kneeling.

The little bell again tinkled, and the priest resumed his place, holding before him a glass case in the form of a

cross, clasped with gold. This was said to contain some pieces of the wood of the true cross. The largest piece seemed no more than three or four inches in length. After exhibiting this in the same way as the former relic, he retired as before.

The Pope, cardinals, prelates &c., were still kneeling.

Again the little bell tinkled, and the priest reappeared in his place, holding in his hands a picture. It was presented as that which our Lord is said to have miraculously impressed by the moisture of his face upon the handkerchief of Veronica. The frame sparkled brilliantly, as if studded with gems, and was barely large enough to contain a likeness of the natural size. It was exhibited like the other relics, and the priests withdrew.

The Pope, cardinals, prelates, &c., were still kneeling.

Such was the scene called "The exhibition of the great relics of St. Peter's." The head of St. Andrew was not exhibited, having been reserved for the day specially dedicated to that Saint. But the other three, the Spear, the Cross, and the Likeness were exhibited. And this exhibition is justly regarded as the most important of all such ceremonies in the Church of Rome. It takes place several times during the Holy Week. And its importance arises from the fact of its being done by the authority and in the presence of the Head of the Church, and before the court of Rome. It is not a private ceremony, or an individual devotion, nor an unauthorised exhibition. It is a grand ceremony of the church. The Pope attends it in state. The court attend it in form. There are fixed days appointed for it, and the ceremony is as much authorized as any ceremony can be in the church of Rome.

Now my impression is this: I have seen the Pope and

cardinals and a similar attendance enter St. Peter's, and kneel in similar form before the elevation of the Host on the High Altar. I have also seen the Pope, and cardinals, and a similar attendance kneel in a similar manner before the Host on the Altar of the chapel of the Holy Sacrament in St. Peter's. I have witnessed this repeatedly. I have also witnessed the ceremonies at the exhibition of the great relics on three different occasions ; and having most narrowly and carefully watched and noted everything, I am bound to avow my impression to be this ;—namely, that the *outward* form of reverence, worship, or adoration paid to the relics, is, in every, even the minutest particulars, identically the same as that paid to the Host. I say—the *outward* form, for no man can judge of the inward feelings or intentions of others ; but of that which every observer may see, and of which he may judge, namely, the *outward* form—the *outward* act of reverence, worship or adoration, in all the highest solemnities of which it is capable, is one and the same, whether rendered to the relics or to the Host. In other words, the Pope, cardinals, and court of Rome render to that which they believe to be a relic, *an outward worship* precisely the same as they render to that which they believe to be God.

I may add here, though perhaps of less importance, an observation that occurred to me on seeing the conduct—the personal conduct of the Pope on these occasions. I observed him narrowly ; and saw that he never looked at one of the relics. While monks, priests, pilgrims, devotees were straining their eyes in gazing on these things, these miracle-working mementos of the past, the Pope himself never raised his eyes, or looked towards one of them. He called for a book,—a large card, like that often

hung in our English churches containing the usual psalms for singing, was given to him, he fixed his eyes on it, and on no occasion, upon which I witnessed the exhibition, did he for a single instant raise his eyes or look towards the relics. He did not even see them. His outward posture of reverence, worship and adoration, with this exception, was the same as that of others. And it occurred to me at the time, that his conduct was that of a man who regarded the affair as one of state ceremony, of which he did not approve, but which for reasons of state it was deemed wise and right to comply with. Such was my impression at the time, and as such I have no hesitation in stating it.

Next in importance to this scene at St. Peter's, is—the exhibition of the Great Relics of the Church di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme.

The fourth Sunday in Lent is the most remarkable day in the year, at the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. All who attend the services at that Church on that day, are entitled to certain indulgences ; and all who have share in the masses celebrated, are entitled to the release of one soul from purgatory. The record of these and other privileges connected with this Church, and this day, is suspended near the High Altar.

The great scene—the fête connected with this day and this Church, takes place in the afternoon ; and is attended by a vast concourse of persons. I recognised princes and princesses, in all the frippery of fashion, jostled and pressed by dirty pilgrims and wretched beggars. A very few English were seen in the crowd, which was essentially Italian, and was diversified by the sombre monks, and the shewy dresses of the Roman peasants. Here was some Italian lady, brilliant in all the newest elegance of Parisian

fashion ; there was some tall pilgrim with staff in hand, and large scallop-shells attached both before his breast and behind his shoulders, to his shapeless pelerine. Here knelt some peasant girl of the Campagna, in all the yellow and green and crimson that give so shewy and brilliant appearance to the fêtes of Rome. There sat some sturdy beggar, saying his beads with all vociferation, interrupted only by his vociferous demands upon the charity of all around him. Here stood a group of Capuchins with their long brown dresses, and their long beards drooping to their breasts ; there stood a knot of Franciscans with their shaven crowns, and their ropes, the cord of St. Francis, around their loins. A few, perhaps one tenth of the assembly, seemed silent and devotional, while all the rest chatted upon any and every topic, and a perfect Babel of many tongues pervaded the vast assemblage.

The great attraction was the exhibition of the relics of this church, so famous among the wonders of Rome, and of which a catalogue has already been given.

At about four o'clock there were Vespers with music in the choir-chapel, and there all the monks, forming a procession, passed into the convent attached to the church. They then descended from the convent into the subterranean chapel of St. Helena, and issuing from this, the procession of monks, all carrying lighted candles, knelt before the altar opposite to the chapel of St. Helena. The bishop knelt at their head, and after repeating a short service there, they ascended in procession as before, the flight of steps from the subterranean, and entered the body of the church. They then passed,—the cross being carried before them—down the church, and issued by the door to the outer part or atrium ; and then returning through the

main aisle or nave, approached the High Altar, prostrated themselves before it, sung a *Te Deum*, and then the Litany to the Saints. After this they retired to make arrangements for the exhibition of the greater relics, while the whole assembly was kept in a state of unceasing motion, by the passing of little processions of various fraternities, dressed in all varieties of colours, and carrying banners of every hue.

Before I proceed to describe this, I have one observation to make. When the procession of bishops and monks knelt before the altar in the subterranean, the consecrated Host was on the altar. Before this as their visible and present God, they prostrated themselves; and this act of worship, however men may disapprove of it, is at least intelligible; but when they knelt before the High Altar of the Church, the Host was not there, but there was in its place *a case of relics*. This case was divided into about an hundred compartments: each compartment contained a small particle of a bone, or a thread, or a stone, or some such fraction of a relic, with a minute label to each, with the name of the Saint whose relic it was. This case was on the altar instead of the Host, and to this case of relics the bishops and monks knelt, prostrating themselves with the same appearance of worship which they had exhibited a few moments before to the Host, as their present and visible divinity. What may have been the feelings of their hearts, or the intentions of their minds, it is not for me to assert, but neither I nor any other person present, could detect the slightest difference in *the worship of the host, and the worship of the relics*.

And now for the exhibition of the greater relics.

At one end of the Church there is a small gallery, capa-

ble of holding three or four persons. In this appeared the bishop in full canonicals, with mitre and alb. On either hand stood a priest ; on these three every eye in the vast assembly was fixed ; one priest rung a bell, then the other handed one of the relics to the bishop ; and he, reverently receiving it, exhibited it to the assembled multitude, the priest announcing with a loud voice—

“ The finger of St. Thomas, the Apostle and Martyr of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The bishop then presented the relic, said to be the very finger with which the unbelieving Thomas touched our Lord’s side ! He held it, according to the invariable custom in exhibiting relics, right before him, then turning it to those on the right, then to those on the left, then again to those immediately before him. He then kissed the glass case which contained the finger, and returned it to the priest.

Another relic was then produced and placed in the hands of the bishop, and the priest as before announced—

“ Two thorns from the crown of thorns of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The bishop exhibited this as before, and it was easy to see in the glass case the two thorns set and standing erect, each thorn being about three inches long. He then kissed the case and returned it to the priest.

A third relic was next produced, it was presented reverently by the priest, and was received as reverently by the bishop, the priest announcing—

“ The tablet with the inscription over the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The bishop exhibited this relic as the others ; the characters in Greek and Hebrew and Latin, though very dark

and large, were very far from being easily legible, and the tablet itself seemed rather small for the occasion. It was about nine or ten inches in length, and about five in depth ; —the bishop also kissed this relic and returned it to the priest.

A fourth relic was next placed in the hands of the bishop, and as he exhibited it, the priest exclaimed—

“ One of the nails that fastened to the cross our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This relic was a very shewy affair, being enclosed in a very pretty glass and gold case. In the centre was a black thing said to be the nail, with two angels made of gold, kneeling and worshipping it ! It was exhibited, kissed, and then returned to the priest.

Another relic was produced—the fifth and last. As the priest presented it to the bishop, the bishop seemed to start under a sense of awe, and to gaze on it with devout wonder. Before he would touch the holy thing he must uncover. His mitre, which had been worn while exhibiting the other relics, was immediately removed. He could not with covered head look upon the sacred thing, he bowed profoundly to it, and then taking a large glass cross from the priest, the priest announced—

“ Three pieces of the most holy wood of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In an instant the whole assembly as if by magic was prostrate, even the monks removed their little skull-caps, and every individual present except the few English there, prostrated himself as in the act of the highest adoration, in precisely the same way as when adoring at the elevation of the host. The silence was deep and profound throughout that vast assembly : some seemed to hold their breath

impressed with awe; some seemed in deep devotion to breathe prayer in secret; some gazed intently on the relic, and moved their lips as if addressing it, while the bishop held it before them. It was a cross of glass, set at the ends in rich chased gold, it was hollow, and there appeared within it three small pieces of wood; they varied from two to four inches in length, and were about half or three quarters of an inch in breadth. After the bishop had duly exhibited this—after the people had worshipped it—after he had returned it to the priest, the bishop and priest retired, and the congregation dispersed.

In the crowd while yet within the church my wife seized the arm of a pick-pocket, who had insinuated his hand into my pocket:—she released her hold, as it was no place for a scene, upon which he coolly transferred his hand to the vessel of holy water, sprinkled himself and departed. I thought it a singular conclusion of such a ceremony!

Having given these illustrations of what is called “the exhibition of relics,” I shall add an illustration of another ceremonial called “the procession of relics.”

I had learned from the *Diario Romano*, that at the church *S. Gregorio de Monte Celio*, there was to be a procession of the arm of St. Gregory, on Nov. 10.” It was the first procession of the kind I had had an opportunity of witnessing, and I accordingly attended.

Immediately after the conclusion of Vespers, the bishops, priests, monks, and other ecclesiastical attendants entered the church with this singular relic. There were about twenty men in monkish dresses, all marching two by two, with enormous candles lighted in their hands. These moved on slowly and solemnly; and were followed by others holding the crosier, the incense, &c. Then came the bishop

in full canonicals : his mitre was on his head, and he was followed by a large number of priests, who with himself were attired in the most magnificent way that white silk and gold embroidery could accomplish. The bishop held the sacred relic in his hands ; it was literally the model of an arm and hand from the elbow ; this was modelled as if the arm was within a sleeve. The sleeve was richly gilt, while the hand projecting from the wrist was as richly plated with silver, so that its appearance was that of a silver arm and hand enclosed in a golden sleeve. This was carried by the bishop immediately before his breast ; and as the stump was down, and the silver hand and long fingers tapered aloft, and as the bishop with down-cast eyes and lips moving rapidly as in prayer to it, carried it along ; and as the soldiers presented arms to this relic and then marched on as a guard of honour on each side of it ; and as the long procession of monks, with their lighted candles, wound their way among the columns of the church before it ; and the priests, in their splendid robes, came after it ; it presented, as a whole, a very singular appearance. It seemed to me neither solemn nor impressive : and partook rather of the tawdry and the ludicrous. The bishop placed the relic on the altar ; it was incensed ; he and those who had taken part in the procession, knelt and worshipped for some moments. He then again took the relic, exhibited it to the right, to the left, and to the centre, and then went again in procession through the church to two other chapels connected with the same convent. In each of these the same ceremony was gone through : and after their conclusion, the whole procession returned to the church. The bishop placed the relic on the altar, and with the procession retired into the convent.

I was desirous, and therefore very watchful, to observe the effect of such exhibitions on the masses of the people. I had expected, that what with the music of the Vespers, the pomp of the procession, and the exhibition of the relic, there would have been much inducement for the people to attend. It proved however, to be one of those which had survived the favour of the people, who reserved their attendance and devotions for some newer relic, or some other saint. Exclusive of the monks, priests and other ecclesiastical attendants, the whole congregation did not amount to thirty souls! Afterwards, as the procession moved through the public way, and in the open air, it was joined by others; so that at the conclusion, there were about two hundred; most of these, on the bishop and priests retiring, went to the altar to examine the relic. I followed their example, and found a hole in the side of the arm. This hole was about one inch in length, and half an inch in breadth; it was covered with glass, through which might be seen a small bone, said to be one of the bones of the arm of the saint. An official handed it to the people, who first kissed the glass, and then touched it with their foreheads; some with marks of deep devotion, and some with the laugh of merriment, and then retired.

On the whole, I was much surprised at the little interest this affair seemed to excite among the people. There *was* a time when it would have moved the mighty masses of the populace; and pilgrimages and offerings, with every kind of outpouring of profound superstition, would have been without number. The bishop then could have agitated and moved the souls of the people by the exhibition of such a relic, as easily as the wind of Autumn could shake the leaves of the forest. But the time is past away;

and though priests and monks may struggle hard to recal the scenes of the past, it seems in vain ; it is a century too late !

These descriptions of the exhibitions of relics at St. Peter's, at Santa Croce, and at St. Gregory's, will amply illustrate such scenes. The following references may be added.

On Nov. 30, the head of the apostle St. Andrew was exposed in St. Peter's. It was a large head and bust, all silver except the eyes, which were glass ; and this was all that could be discovered, it being left to the worshippers to imagine that the real head of the saint was enclosed in this silver case. It was exposed to view in the little gallery over the image of St. Helena.

On Dec. 14, the arm of St. Spiridione was exhibited in a case of gold and silver, like that of St. Gregory, already described ; it was exhibited on the altar of that noble church called *La Chisa Nuova* ; and the whole congregation consisted of four men and one woman !

On July 18, there were the relics of four arms of saints exposed, with innumerable other relics, in the church of St. George. These arms were enclosed in gilt and plated cases, like those already described.

On Ash Wednesday, at the church of St. Sabina, the two arms of that saint were exposed in like manner, together with a large vase full of minute pieces of bones, said to be the relics of various saints.

On the same day were exposed two heads, in silvered cases like that of St. Andrew, said to be the heads of St. Alexis and St. Boniface. This was in the church of Alessio or Alexis, and they were accompanied by a large collection of small fragments of bones, all labelled with

the names of saints, and looking like the specimens in a museum of mineralogy.

At St. Giovanni di Laterano, the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul are exhibited on several occasions, the chief difference between them and other similar exhibitions being, that instead of cases like busts, they are enclosed in cases of what may be called three-quarter lengths, sufficiently large to enclose the bodies as well as the heads. The bodies, however, of these saints, are said to repose at St. Peter's.

After visiting one or two of these exhibitions of relics, they lose all their interest for the stranger, except as the last and lingering traces of an expiring superstition.

There was nothing in the church of Rome that at first more interested me, than the relics ; and there was nothing at the close of my residence of which I was so thoroughly wearied. The charm usually associated with the remains of these martyrs and saints of Christ, who have proved themselves the noblest examples of the human race,—this charm was felt first to absent itself—then to fade away, and in the end it was annihilated. The dark superstition that characterised all—the gross idolatry that was associated with it—and then the unblushing impudence of the imposture that was so palpable, all introduced trains of thought that utterly crushed and destroyed the pleasurable interest once experienced in connection with these relics.

CHAPTER XI.

INSCRIPTIONS IN CHURCHES.

CONVERSATION WITH A PRIEST ON THIS SUBJECT—INSCRIPTIONS IN THE
PROTESTANT CEMETERY—IN THE CHURCH OF ST. CARLO BORROMEO—
IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARIA LIBERATRICE—IN THE ARCHBISHOP'S
CHAPEL AT RAVENNA—IN THE CHURCH AT ZUG—IN THE CHURCH ON
THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE OF REMUS—IN THE CHURCH OF SCALZI
AT VENICE—IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARIA DELLA PACE AT ROME
—IN THE CATHEDRAL OF LUCCA—IN ST. PETER'S AT ROME.

CHAPTER XI.

INSCRIPTIONS IN CHURCHES.

THE simplicity which characterizes the inscriptions on the monuments of the primitive Christians, forms a striking contrast to the inscriptions on the churches of the modern Romans. The former had reference to the departed having died in the peace of God and the faith of Christ, while the latter embody sentiments and doctrines that are wholly incapable of defence or even of palliation.

There, on the walls of the churches—on the sides of the altars underneath the pictures—in all the most sacred places of the noblest churches of Rome, those Inscriptions stand, to offend the Protestant Christian and to shame the Roman Catholic.

In conversation with one of the priesthood, who had, at a former period of his life, been a Protestant clergyman, I called his attention to these Inscriptions, and specifying some of them, I urged them as an illustration of the manner in which certain doctrines were sanctioned in the church of Rome; adding, that although in private conference they

denied a belief in these things, they yet adopted them publicly in their churches.

He replied, by stating that he entirely disapproved of some of those Inscriptions, and prayers and pictures, which certainly were to be seen in too many of their churches,—that he thought them wrong, and that although he could not go so far as to condemn them as unchristian and heretical, as idolatrous or blasphemous, yet he felt they were wrong, and ought never to be seen either in the churches or elsewhere.

I stated that his rejection and disapproval of them was what might be expected from him; but that if the Pope—if the congregation of the Index—if the priesthood rejected and disapproved of them as he did, they never would be permitted to remain in the churches.

He replied that the Pope—the congregation of the Index—the priesthood—the church, never interfered in such affairs; that they were left altogether to the clergy of the churches themselves; that it was a part of the religious liberties of the people to let them do as pleased themselves in such matters, provided only that there was nothing *against* or *contrary* to the teaching of the church herself. He added that for his part, if it rested with him, he would not permit them.

To this I rejoined, that all this apology on the part of the church, might pass very well, *if it were true* that there was no interference with such trivial matters as inscriptions; and I reminded him that the most close and watchful surveillance was practised in this very respect; so much so that every inscription—even so far as an inscription on a tomb in the Protestant Cemetery, was required to be first submitted for the approval of the Congregation of the Index.

I mentioned two circumstances of the kind that had occurred but a short time before. One was narrated to me by a General in the British Service, who had been requested by an English lady of his acquaintance to get a monument erected to the memory of her child in the Protestant cemetery at Rome. When the monument was prepared and a sentence of Holy Scripture graven on it, it was submitted to the authorities for their sanction. This sanction was at once and most angrily refused. The objection was to the words of Holy Scripture, "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." This was the only inscription, beyond the name of the dead, and it was selected as a sentence against which no jealousy could be felt. The chief Inquisitor however declaimed in the fiercest terms against it, saying to the General that he never would permit such a falsehood to be inscribed, implying that the child, who died a heretic, could possibly hope for joy in the other world! The General however had influence in a higher quarter, and at once went to the court—had the decision overruled, and obtained the necessary permission. This, however, was owing to his own personal influence. The other instance occurred also in reference to the inscription on the grave of an English child. The words, if my memory be exact, were simply "He died in Jesus." And yet natural and beautiful as these simple words were—unobjectionable as they might well be supposed to be—the permission was refused to the mother who desired to inscribe these words on the tomb of her child. It was suggested to alter the words thus—"He sleeps in Jesus," and in this form the Inscription was permitted.

It will probably be asked, where was the real difference between them, that permission was ceded to one and re-

fused to the other. The reason was this : The statement that "He died in Jesus" would imply that one who died in Protestantism could die in Jesus ; and this could never be sanctioned. But the statement that "He sleeps in Jesus," involves nothing as to his state when he died, and allows the hope that masses and prayers and indulgences may have afterwards altered his condition, so that though it was not true that "He died in Jesus" it might be true that now at least "He sleeps in Jesus." The permission was first withheld, and afterwards given, on such trifling distinctions as these !

But to return. I narrated both these instances to the priest with whom I was conversing, and I argued that they shewed that the authorities of the Church of Rome were not so careless in the matter of Inscriptions as he seemed anxious I should believe. I added that if they were very watchful in reference to the Inscriptions in the Protestant Cemetery, as feeling themselves compromised by them, they were surely no less watchful as to the Inscriptions in their own churches, as by them they were still more likely to be compromised.

A few of the Inscriptions to which I referred may be given here, in contrast with the purity and simplicity of those that characterized the Primitive Church.

In the church of S. Carlo Borromeo in the Corso, is a very large painting of the Virgin Mary. As being one of the most fashionable churches of Rome, and in one of its best situations, it is a church attended by considerable numbers. Nor are these the lower classes of the citizens, but chiefly the highest, most wealthy, and most distinguished. It is therefore before their eyes—the eyes of the more enlightened classes, that this painting with its remarkable inscription is presented.

The Inscription is as follows,

“Tu sola
interemisti
universas hereses.”

“Thou alone hast destroyed all heresies.”

The ascription of such a power to the Virgin Mary,—the ascription of such a divine power to one, who at the best was but a creature—is in itself one of the greatest of heresies. That it was not the mere mistake of an artist, or the mere opinion of a priest, that gave this extraordinary sentiment so remarkable a prominence, appears from the fact, that it was adopted and sanctioned in one of the most official documents that can emanate from the court of Rome. On the elevation of each Pope, it is required by immemorial custom, that he shall issue an encyclical letter, addressed to all the bishops of Christendom, concerning those religious matters which might be supposed most to interest one who was just elevated to the Headship of the Church on earth. In the encyclical letter issued in 1832 by the present Pope Gregory XVI. [1845] he adopts as his own, the sentiment of this inscription. His words are,

“Sed ut omnia hæc prospere ac feliciter eveniant, levemus oculos manusque ad sanctissimam Virginem Mariam, *quæ sola universas hereses interemit*. Nostraque maxima fiducia, imo tota ratio est spei nostræ.

“That all these may fall out prosperously and happily, let us lift up our eyes and hands to the Most holy Virgin Mary, *who alone has destroyed all heresies*; who is our greatest confidence, even the whole ground of our hope.”

It is the special office of the Holy Spirit to lead to, and to teach, all truth, and by his light to dissipate all the darkness of error and heresy. And nothing can be more

distressing and saddening to a truly Christian mind, than to see this special office of the Holy Spirit ascribed to the mother of our Lord. It is an ascribing to a woman, "the Most Holy Mary," that which belongs to the alone God, the Holy Spirit.

There is another inscription still more remarkable, though of somewhat the same character, on the church of S. Maria Liberatrice. This church is in the Roman Forum, and it stands almost at the foot of the Capitol. The inscription however is not, like the former one, at the foot of a painting, but graven in deep and indelible letters on the portico or front of the church, so as that all who pass by may read it. It is as follows.

" Sancta Maria,

libera nos

a pœnis infernis."

" Holy Mary, deliver us from the pains of Hell."

It is impossible for any one to enter this church without reading this prayer. The church is dedicated to "Holy Mary, the Deliverer," and to her as the Deliverer or Saviour, this prayer is offered, that she may deliver or save the soul from the sufferings of hell. It is not merely a petition, that she might free the sinner from the pains of an imaginary purgatorian fire, or from any secondary state of punishment; but the prayer has direct reference to the final salvation of the soul from hell. Neither is it a prayer for her intercession or mediation or interference, in any modified way, but it is a direct prayer, ascribing by implication to her a power to save from hell. There is no allusion to Christ—to his blood—to his merits—to his atonement—to his power. There is only a simple prayer to Mary, to do that which can only be done by Christ: and therefore, however

painful and saddening it may be to one to utter it, or to another to hear it, this inscription must be pronounced to be a blasphemous and idolatrous inscription. It is blasphemous, as against Christ, depriving Him of that which is His great and glorious work ; and it is idolatrous as respects Mary, inasmuch as it involves such worship as attributes to her, a mere creature, that which is the rightful prerogative of God alone—namely, deliverance from hell.

In the chapel of the archbishop's palace at Ravenna, there is an inscription that much struck me. The chapel is so arranged as to be a sort of *via sacra*—a way of sacred stations. There are accordingly seven stations appointed in it, and the devout pass from one station to another, uttering prescribed prayers at each, till the whole series of seven stations is completed, when this religious exercise is perfected. All travellers in Roman Catholic countries, and especially in Italy, are acquainted with this system. It is designed to exhibit the sufferings of our Lord in seven particulars,—to represent these by so many pictures ; and to arrest the thoughts and meditations of the devout, and to fix them upon these representations.

At the foot of each of these stations, in the chapel of the archbishop there is a prayer, and the following words addressed to the Virgin Mary.

“ Holy Mary, do thou cause that the sufferings of our Lord may be impressed upon my heart.”

That this is a prayer to the Virgin Mary is clear and beyond question,—an explicit and direct prayer to her, to exert an influence on the heart—to take the sufferings of Christ and impress them on the heart. All persons acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, are aware that this is the office of God, the Holy Spirit ; it is He, the Holy

Spirit, who applies and impresses the work and sufferings of Christ on the heart. But in this striking Inscription, presented to the eyes of the worshipper, at each of the seven stations of the Archbishop's chapel, the worshipper is directed to pray to the Virgin Mary instead of the Holy Spirit in this matter. And thus, while in some places the devotion of the members of the Roman church towards the Virgin Mary, is so exaggerated, as to place her in many respects on an equality with God the Son, in this as in some other instances, it substitutes her for God the Holy Spirit ; so that there is scarcely an object described in Holy Scripture as belonging to the province or office of the Holy Spirit, for which they do not pray to the Virgin Mary.

Among the many Inscriptions on the walls of churches or beside the altars, there was none that struck me with more force than one that had reference to the supposed influence or authority of the Virgin Mary over our Lord. It is believed in the church of Rome, that she yet exerts the influence and authority of a mother over her child—that this is even now exercised by her in order to the salvation of some who could not otherwise be saved.

The Inscription to which I allude, has reference to this. It is found in the church at Zug : and is in these words :—

Perge Virgo, perge parus,

Perge Luna, latè carus,

Pete felix æthera,

Si nos damnat reos natus

Noxæ judex implacatus,

Monstra, Mater, Ubera !

The latter clause of this may be translated thus ;—

“ If thy Son—our unappealed Judge—condemn us accused of sins, O Mother, shew to him thy breasts ! ”

This is an appeal to the Virgin Mary, as a Mother ; and it appeals to her to shew her breasts to Christ, to remind Him of “ the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.” And this appeal is made under peculiar circumstances. It supposes that Christ has sat in judgment upon the sinner, and condemned him ; and that the sinner has had no satisfying plea to offer, so that the judge is inexorable. It then supposes that the Virgin Mary shews her breasts to Christ, an appealing by that act to her influence or authority as a Mother, she induces Him to forgive the sinner. This is the obvious meaning of this extraordinary Inscription, implying in this way, that Mary is more merciful than Christ—that the sinner has more hope of mercy from Mary than from Christ—that even where the mercies and love of Christ are exhausted, and he condemns the sinner, still the tenderness of Mary may interpose and induce a reversal of the sentence. This is the plain effect of this Inscription. It implies a contrast between Christ and Mary. It implies, that Christ is less forgiving than Mary. It implies, that Mary is more merciful and compassionate than Christ ; as shewing mercy and compassion to those for whom Christ has shewn neither mercy nor compassion—a sentiment as dishonouring towards Christ as it is idolatrous towards Mary.

There is a church at Rome, in the *via sacra*, leading from the Capitol to the Coliseum, of singular interest. It stands on the spot where, in the days of heathen Rome, stood the temple of Remus. The larger portion of this church is a circular building of great antiquity, in the usual style of the heathen temples : and this is supposed to be the remains of the original temple of classic times, as dedicated to Remus. I am very far from pretending to such a know-

ledge of antiquity as to offer any opinion as to the probability of this supposition. I only know, that this circular temple is now part of a church in which there is a very singular inscription. And this inscription is placed in that part of the church which is of all the most public. It is placed over the Holy Water, to which all persons must resort, on entering the church, before partaking of any of the services. It is as follows :—

Indulgenza.

“ L’immagine di Maria Santissima, che esiste all’ altare maggiore, parlò a Santo Gregorio Papa, dicendagli—Perché piu non mi saluti mentre passando eri solito salutarim. Il santo domando perdono, e concesse a quelli che celebrano in quell’ altare la liberazione dell’ anima dal Purgatorio, cioè per quell’ anima per la quale si celebra la messa.”

Indulgence.

“ The Image of the most Holy Mary, which stands on the High Altar, spoke to the Holy Pope Gregory, saying to him—Why do you no longer salute me in passing, with the accustomed salutation ? The Saint asked pardon, and granted to those who celebrate mass at that altar, the deliverance of a soul from Purgatory, that is, the special soul for which they celebrate the mass.”

In this extraordinary Inscription, thus publicly and officially exhibited in the church, there are three items of the Roman religion. Firstly, there is the broad statement, that the Image of the Virgin Mary spoke to the Pope. Secondly, there is the statement that some masses and some altars have power to deliver souls from Purgatory. Thirdly, there is the assertion, that the Pope possesses the power of granting this peculiar privilege or power to the masses of any altar. The two latter points are adverted to

in another Inscription : and therefore the first may be noticed here.

It is often said, that in the church of Rome, they do not ascribe any inherent power or spirit to Images—that they regard them merely as images of wood or stone, representing persons, but as being worthless in themselves, as having no power or virtue in themselves, more than any other pieces of wood or stone. Here, however, they ascribe to this Image of Mary the power of speaking—speaking miraculously to the Pope. And this is done in the most formal way, and in the most public place in the church, so as that all who enter may read the statement. It is but a poor compliment to the Virgin Mary, or to her image, to say that when she did miraculously open her lips of stone—when she made a new revelation to the world, it had reference to an affair of personal vanity—not to the sins or holiness of men, or to the forgiveness or salvation of their immortal souls, but to the mode of saluting her image ! Assuredly in the days of heathen Rome, when the worshippers bowed before the image of Remus, in this his temple, there was nothing comparable in absurdity to this.

In some instances, however, the absurd is overpassed by the awful, and the smile compelled to give place to the shudder. All this would be sufficiently saddening and sickening to a pious spirit, even if it were found in the cottage of the ignorant peasant, or in the garret of the brutalized citizen. The ignorance of one, and the brutality of the other, might seem to some persons a sort of palliation, if not an apology for such things. And a church may thus be held exempt from the charge of holding or teaching things, which are seen only in the dark places of ignorance and vice, and which have received no

sanction whatever from the enlightened and instructed, and especially from the priesthood of the church. But however this mode of reasoning may apply to much that is witnessed in Italy, it yet manifestly does not apply to those things which are formally and officially proclaimed by the priesthood and in the churches, graven upon the walls of the churches and read with the approval of the priesthood.

In the church Scalzi, at Venice, is an altar. The altarpiece or painting over it, is what is usually called a "Holy Family," and represents the child Jesus with Mary and Joseph. The Inscription is short but expressive.

"Jesu, Josephus, Maria, per quos omnia."

"Jesus, Joseph, Mary, by whom are all things."

The words "by whom are all things," are familiar to every reader of the Holy Scriptures. They are a reference to the works of creation, called forth from the womb of eternity by the Son of God, through whom or by whom are all things. In this inscription, it is not Jesus alone, but also Joseph and Mary to whom all this is ascribed, as if they shared with him, or could possibly be partakers with him, in the work of creation. This idea was so absurd, that it is necessary to take another view of the matter, namely, that they have adopted the Socinian interpretation of the Scripture, regarding it as having reference, not to the original creation of the world of nature, but to the creation, as it were, of the gospel or christian dispensation, that is, the world of christian morals, rather than the world of physical nature. In this view of the Inscription they ascribe the gospel or christian dispensation not to Jesus alone, but to Joseph and Mary as sharers in the work—as partakers with him in thus calling this new world of revelation, of light, of morals, into existence.

In whatever light we look on this strange Inscription, it lowers Christ to a level with Joseph and Mary. It places them all on an equality, and that too in a matter wherein the creative power is involved, and wherein therefore Christ must stand alone—unequal—unapproachable. The same observation is applicable to that remarkable prayer of Pius VII., to the offering of which he conceded an indulgence of three hundred days.

“ Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, I give you my heart and soul.

“ Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, assist me in my last agony.”

“ Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, I breathe out my soul in peace with you.”

There is here no difference between Jesus on one hand, and Joseph and Mary on the other. In the manner of the address—in the devotion of the soul—in the prayer of the votary, there is no difference whatever made, between the God and the man—between the Creator and his creatures. Either Christ is reduced too low, or Joseph and Mary raised too high—either God is degraded to the level of his creatures, or the creatures are exalted to the level of God. It is like placing two subjects beside the king on his throne, and then addressing them alike with the king; and it is thus dishonouring to Christ, the King and God, and idolatrous to Joseph and Mary, his subjects and creatures. As nothing can be said to extenuate the language of this prayer, so nothing can be offered to palliate this Inscription, placed as it is in the most solemn—the most sacred—the most awful place. It is inscribed on the wall beside the altar: and just as in some Protestant churches we read these words over the Table—“ Do this in remembrance of me,” so in the Roman church we read the words

at the altar, "Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, by whom are all things." There is not another word,

It was observed on an Inscription in the church where formerly stood the temple of Remus, that it implied that some altars had the peculiar privilege of being able to release any one from purgatory by a single mass, and that the Pope had the power of conferring on any altar this singular privilege. There is nothing more frequently remarked by Protestants on entering the churches of Rome than the constant recurrence of the words "*Indulgentia Plenaria*,"—*A Plenary Indulgence*—inscribed over the altar, intimating that there was a Plenary Indulgence attached to the masses offered there, and this is tantamount to the emancipation of any soul from purgatory through a mass offered at that altar.

Instead of these words, however, the same thing is more plainly expressed in some churches. In the church S. Maria della Place, so celebrated for the magnificent fresco of the sybils by Raphael, there is over one of the altars the following inscription :

"Ogni messa celebrata in quest' altare libera un animo dal' purgatorio."

"Every mass celebrated at this altar frees a soul from purgatory."

In some churches this privilege extends throughout the year, but in others it is limited to those masses which are offered on particular days. In the church of S. Croce di Gerusalemme, this privilege is connected in an especial manner *with the fourth Sunday in Lent*. And this is notified by a public notice posted in the church close to the altar, setting forth that a mass celebrated there on that day releases a soul from purgatory. And it has already been

observed that a notice of the same character is seen in the church that stands on the site of the Temple of Remus.

So far therefore as a public notice, or an Inscription in one of its holy places, involves or compromises a church, so far the church of Rome must be held involved and pledged to the position that a mass at one altar has greater efficacy than a mass at another altar—that while a mass at a privileged altar has sufficient spiritual merit to release altogether a soul from purgatory, a mass at a non-privileged altar has not sufficient value to do so, but only to relieve partially the suffering soul. This makes the efficacy of the mass to consist not essentially in the mass itself, but in the altar at which it is offered—not essentially in the mass, which they regard as the sacrifice of Christ, but in the privileges of the altar at which it is offered. It should not be stated that it is intended to teach this, but undoubtedly it is a natural result of the system.

And it leads a step farther. If once any particular altar is supposed to possess this particular privilege, there will naturally be a great desire to gain the benefit of the masses of that altar. Those persons who desire to release the souls of their friends supposed to be in purgatory, will pay any sums to purchase these masses. The abuses and traffic to which this system gives birth, may easily be conceived, I have myself seen at S. Croce di Gerusalemme, a monk attending in the vestry or adjoining apartment, who on the receipt of about two shillings, gave a document pledging the offering of the required mass for the release of the soul whose name was inserted in the document.

The whole system implies that the Pope—who grants the privilege—can impart this extraordinary potency to the masses offered in one place, and can withhold it from

those offered elsewhere. How he possesses this power over that which they hold to be "the true and proper and propitiatory sacrifice" of Jesus Christ himself, they do not pretend to explain. It certainly is very hard to understand it.

There is a remarkable Inscription in the cathedral of Lucca. It has been already referred to in noticing that edifice. And it is now again noticed as one of those instances in which the worst and grossest errors are presented continually before the eyes and minds of the people. In a church and country like Italy, where the Holy Scriptures are a sealed or prohibited book, and where therefore the people have no corrective to error in their hands, it is the more incumbent on the authorities to take care that no error is presented through their means to the eyes or minds of the people. Those who are so zealous in excluding the Holy Scriptures, ought at least to be zealous in removing all Inscriptions that might lead to the diffusion of error.

The Inscription is as follows :

Christo
Liberatori
ac

Divis Tutularibus.

The error is the classing 'the tutelary Gods,' or 'the divine guardians,' with Christ, the Saviour. It is very true that these tutelary gods, or divine guardians, are alleged to mean the saints or angels. Such was the title anciently given in heathen times to the heathen gods and demi-gods : and it is here applied to the saints or angels. This is clearly the intention of the Inscription. And the error is, the classing them with Christ, as if it was not He alone who deli-

vered the city from the plague which this monument was designed to commemorate; and as if these saints and angels had their share with him in the glory of this deliverance.

If such a doctrine be a doctrine of the church of Rome, its inscription on the walls of her cathedrals is consistent and intelligible: but if it be a doctrine not received, then it ought never to have been permitted to be inscribed in a manner so public, or in a place so sacred.

But whatever may be thought of inferior and less important churches, it must be admitted that any inscriptions in the great Basilica of St. Peter derive from such a locality considerable importance. St. Peter's church is often regarded as the type or symbol of the church of Rome. One inscription is as follows:—

“ Partem crucis, quam Helena Imperatrix e Calvario in urbem avexit Urbanus VIII., Pontifex Maximus a Sessoriana Basilica disumptam additis ara et statua hic in Vaticano conditorio collocavit.”

“ The piece of the Cross, which the Empress Helena brought from Calvary to the city, Urban VIII., Chief Pontiff, placed here in the Vatican receptacle, adding an altar and a statue.”

This Inscription is a formal adoption of the old legend respecting the finding of the cross. The legend is to the effect that the Empress Helena, desirous of finding the true cross on which our Lord was crucified, gave directions to make excavations upon Mount Calvary, in the hope that it might have been buried there. The excavations were made accordingly, and to the marvellous satisfaction of those interested, three crosses were discovered. This discovery, however, led to the great perplexity of ascertaining

on which of the three our Lord was crucified ; but this perplexity was soon removed in that age of wonders. A dead body was ordered to be extended on each of the crosses. The body remained dead and unaffected when extended on one ; it again remained dead and unaffected when extended on the second ; but, the instant it touched the third cross, the dead body arose, and the miracle established the identity of the cross for ever ! Helena sent a portion of it as a precious relic to Rome.

The piece of the cross, thus preserved in St. Peter's, is only a few inches in length. It is exhibited publicly on certain high days of ceremony, when the Pope and Cardinals, and the whole ecclesiastical court, attend to worship or venerate it. The statue is a statue of the Empress Helena, holding the cross in one hand and the nails in the other.

A second inscription is as follows :—

“ *Salvatoris Imaginem Veronica sudaria exceptam ut loci Majestas decenter custodiret, Urbanus VIII., Pontifex Maximus, conditorium extruxit et ornavit.*”

“ That the Majesty of the place might guard becomingly Veronica's likeness of the Saviour, impressed by his sweat, Urban VIII., Chief Pontiff, built and adorned the shrine.”

This Inscription is a formal adoption of this absurd and long-exploded fiction of the picture of our Lord. The fiction has been noted elsewhere, in dealing with the subject of relics, and their exhibition at St. Peter's.

The statue is a statue of Saint Veronica—the more absurd, as it is tolerably certain that no such person ever existed, and that the fiction had its birth in a ludicrous mistake.

A third inscription is as follows :—

“ This picture of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, which stood between the pillars of the porch of the ancient Basilica, having been struck by an impious hand, poured forth blood—*sanguinem fudit*—on the stone, which is now protected by a grating.”

This Inscription is attached to a picture of the Virgin Mary, in the subterranean church of St. Peter's ; and it adopts the fact or principle, call it as men will, that there are miraculous pictures, and that these pictures have some virtue or power in them. If one picture be miraculous, and another non-miraculous : if one resents an injury and weeps tears, or sheds blood, or utters words, it clearly possesses a power or virtue which is not possessed by others. It is in vain for partizans to disclaim, or controversialists to deny, a belief of any thing peculiar in images or pictures in themselves, for which they are specially to be worshipped, as if they possessed any peculiar virtue or power. The fact is broad and plain. At St. Peter's, this picture of the Virgin Mary has miraculous powers, according to this Inscription. At S. Maria Maggiore, there is another picture of the Virgin Mary, which also possesses miraculous powers, according to the Inscription there.

There is no need of any argument on this subject. The Inscriptions themselves speak their own story ; and so far as a church can be involved or compromised, or pledged by her own Inscriptions—by Inscriptions paraded and emblazoned in the most formal and public manner, and in the most sacred and solemn places of the churches, so far the Church of Rome is involved, compromised and pledged by these Inscriptions, and the peculiar principles which they contain.

CHAPTER XII.

THE USES OF HOLY WATER.

THE USE OF HOLY WATER—ITS ORIGIN—REMARKABLE DOCUMENTS IN
THE CHURCHES AT ROME—THE BAPTISM OF ANIMALS—ST. ANTHO-
NY'S DAY — CURIOUS CUSTOM AT HIS CHURCH — EXTRAORDINARY
SCENE—BAPTISM OF A WHOLE REGIMENT—ORIGIN OF THIS CUSTOM
—STORY FROM ST. JEROME.

CHAPTER XII.

THE USES OF HOLY WATER.

It is customary in the Churches at Rome, as in all the Churches of Roman Catholic countries, to have vessels or fonts of water within the entrance. This is called Holy water ; it is made by throwing a little salt into water, accompanying the act by certain forms of prayer, by which it is believed to be made holy. All members of the Church of Rome, as they enter, dip a finger in this water, and sprinkle their face with it ; usually making the sign of the cross in the ordinary form of blessing themselves.

The origin of this custom has been a subject of much antiquarian research, and a source of some controversial bitterness. It seem originally to have been borrowed from the Heathen, among whom the same custom prevailed of sprinkling themselves with holy or consecrated water, as they entered their temples. The vessels or fonts for this water, and the brush or asperges for sprinkling it, may be seen represented in many an ancient relief. But the custom seems to have been adopted very early in the history of the Christian Church, to symbolize the purity or holiness,

with which a Christian should approach the services of the church in the worship of God.

It is in this light that this practice is regarded and defended, by the sensible and well-informed portion of the Roman Catholics ; and they find it as difficult as ourselves to justify, or even to explain, the other uses or occasions on which Holy-Water is employed. The church, though permitting such uses, yet as a church, has never given any authoritative exposition of her views ; and this omission on her part has opened the door to practices singularly strange and deeply superstitious. It certainly is liable to such abuses ; and considering how very prone the mass of mankind has always been to take a gross and sensual view of symbols, substituting the symbol for that which it symbolizes, and venerating the type instead of the archetype, it were as well that this symbolical use of water at the entrance of the churches, and on some other occasions, were discontinued. At the same time it must be admitted that among the sensible, intelligent and well-informed of the Church of Rome, the custom is perfectly harmless, and is regarded simply as an ancient custom, continued merely because it is ancient.

It is difficult to learn anything precise as to the various uses of *Holy Water*. With some it is regarded as an ancient custom which they do not pretend to explain, but which is continued because it is ancient. With others it is regarded as a type, as an emblem symbolizing holiness as becoming the Christian. With others again it is regarded as possessing some mysterious or miraculous character, as a safeguard against the power of evil spirits. Whether we question the simple peasants, the educated laity, or the learned clergy, there is the same diversity of

opinion as to its objects and uses ; and the various occasions, the various ceremonies and various things to which it is applied, are the cause of this diversity of opinion ; its explanation in one case being wholly inapplicable to another. Whatever may be implied in sprinkling Holy Water on a man, will scarcely be applicable to the sprinkling it on a candle ; and whatever may be symbolized in sprinkling a Pope at St. Peter's, can hardly be implied in the sprinkling an Ass at St. Antony's ; and whatever is to be taught by the sprinkling the nuns of a nunnery, must be different from that which is taught by the sprinkling the horses of a regiment of dragoons.

These various uses I have myself seen. I have stood by while the Holy Water has been sprinkled by the Pope himself upon Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, &c. upon the palms on Palm-Sunday, upon the ashes on Ash-Wednesday, and upon the candles on the Epiphany. I have seen it sprinkled upon the coffin of a dead Cardinal by his surviving brethren ; and upon the dresses of living nuns both on taking the white veil and on taking the black veil. I have seen it sprinkled upon houses, and upon apartments, and upon beds, even upon my own bed, by priests attending in their sacerdotal robes for the occasion. I have seen it sprinkled by a mitred abbot upon lambs, and by priests upon horses, and by monks upon mules, asses, and dogs. I have seen it in every possible application, and yet could never, to any enquiry, obtain a consistent explanation. Still it is of universal use : vessels containing Holy Water stand at the entrance of every church. In some the people dip the finger in the water and sprinkle themselves, in others an official touches with a brush dipped in the water, the hands of all who enter. And

even in private houses there is scarcely a bed without a small vessel of Holy Water, suspended above it or beside it.

The only reasonable and consistent way for accounting for this is, to suppose that there are not merely one but many uses in Holy Water, and that these various uses account for its various application.

This seems to be the truth, and is justified by a most extraordinary document, affixed over the vessels of Holy Water, in the church of S. Carlo Borromeo in the Corso. It is affixed there as publicly as any authoritative document could be fixed in an English Church, so that it is impossible to approach the vessel without seeing this public, formal and official statement of the uses of the Holy Water; and as this is one of the churches in which the Pope and Cardinals attend in state for certain high services, it is the more important to find such a document there; the more especially as it is one of the few fashionable Churches of Rome, attended by the higher and more educated classes.

This document or statement is as follows.

“Holy Water possesses much usefulness, when Christians sprinkle themselves with it with due reverence and devotion. The HOLY CHURCH proposes it as a remedy and assistant in many circumstances both spiritual and corporeal, but especially in these following.

“Its spiritual usefulness.

“I. It drives away devils from places and from persons.

“II. It affords great assistance against fears and diabolical illusions.

“III. It cancels venial sins.

“IV. It imparts strength to resist temptations, and occasions to sin.

“V. It drives away wicked thoughts.

“VI. It preserves safely from the passing snares of the devil, both internally and externally.

“VII. It obtains the favour and presence of the Holy Ghost, by which the soul is consoled, rejoiced, excited to devotion, and disposed to prayer.

“VIII. It prepares the human mind for a better attendance on the Divine Mysteries, and receiving piously and worthily the most Holy Sacrament.”

“Its corporal usefulness.

“I. It is a remedy against barrenness both in woman and in beasts.

“II. It is a preservation from sickness.

“III. It heals the infirmities both of the mind and of the body.

IV. It purifies infected air, and drives away plague and contagion.”

Such is this document. It is the only authorized one I have seen respecting Holy Water ; and this extraordinary statement stands as publicly in the church as do the Ten Commandments in a church in England. It is affixed separately over each of the vessels containing the Holy Water ; and as every member of the congregation must have sprinkled himself with the water as he entered the church, so he may have seen and read these its uses.

To attempt a confutation of all these uses of Holy Water, would be to lose sight of the common sense of mankind. To suppose that Holy Water drives away devils, and draws down the Holy Spirit—that it cancels venial sins and dispels diabolical illusions ; that it preserves from sickness, and drives away evil thoughts ; that it purifies the air from contagious disease, and remedies barrenness

in women ; to suppose all this or any item of all this, implies either knavery or folly ; and the affixing of such a document in such a place, a place so public and so sacred, argues a spirit among the priesthood of Rome, which language must fail to denounce with adequate energy. The sarcasm of Cicero against the priests of pagan Rome, that he knew not how two of them could look each other in the face without laughing, is certainly as applicable to these priests of papal Rome.

This however is far from being the most extraordinary part of this matter. It sometimes assumes phases so exquisitely ridiculous, that the very narration appears almost like scoffing at the things of religion. I allude to the scenes transacted on St. Anthony's day, of which I was myself a spectator.

Saint Anthony is supposed to be the patron-saint of animals. His elevation to this dignity arose from his having mistaken and ridiculously perverted a passage in the Scriptures. When our Lord issued his last instructions to his Apostles, he desired them to "go and preach the Gospel to *every creature*," meaning thereby to every *human* creature ; but St. Anthony, imagining that it was to be taken strictly,—thought that it applied to every *living* creature, and thence sagaciously concluded that the Gospel ought to be preached to all the inferior animal creation—to the birds of the air, to the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea ; and the success of these singular preachings is frequently displayed in pictures. In one in the Vatican, the fishes are all represented as putting their heads out of the water, and listening devoutly to the saint, who is preaching on the shore !

The Festival of this St. Anthony is celebrated at his

Church every year for three days, beginning on the 19th of January. I attended it on two days, and I shall endeavour to describe the scene.

On the first day—the great day of the feast, and especially great on this occasion as happening to fall on a Sunday—as I approached the church, which is immediately beyond S. Maria Maggiore, my ears were assailed by the laughter and shouting of a multitude in a state of the greatest merriment : and as I approached nearer still, I perceived in front of the church, and occupying the whole space, a vast assemblage of persons of both sexes and of every age, waving hats, clapping hands, hurraing at the loudest, and laughing to excess. And when at last I was able to penetrate the throng, and to stand within the circle before the church, I beheld a sight that can never be forgotten. An aged priest stood on the steps of the church door ; he held an aspergillum or brush for holy water in hand. He was robed in full canonicals. Beside him stood another priest, younger in years, also robed, and holding in his hand a large vessel full of holy water. Two or three officials of the church were in attendance. The crowd of spectators was so arranged that there was a large vacant space immediately in front of the church. Within this space or ring, the people led or rode horses, asses, sheep, dogs and every species of inferior animals,—brought them one by one to church—and there the priest, dipping his brush into the holy water, solemnly pronounced a blessing—placed them under the guardianship of St. Anthony, and then baptized or sprinkled the animal, receiving some small fee in return ! This was sometimes given in money for the monks of St. Anthony, and sometimes in candles for the altar.

But the ludicrous part of the scene was when some luckless wight had to conduct some obstinate mule or some sulky ass to the priest. The crowd made it their business to shout and halloo so as to terrify the animal, and often to make it still more obstinate and sulky than before. There they jested and jeered with untiring assiduity at the poor fellow, till the mule or the ass, plunging violently, would sometimes fling the rider to the ground ; and sometimes when brought almost within reach, and the priest would raise his brush to sprinkle the water, the animal would again dart away, scared at the sight of his robes, the raising of his arm, and the waving of his brush. It was at such moments that the mirth and merriment of the crowding people would become uproarious. The priest at times fell in good-naturedly with this humour of the people, and would intentionally give such a flourish of his brush and arm, as was sure to scare the animal. And then hats were waved, and hands were clapped, and the cheer went round and round again, till the frightened animals became wholly unmanageable, and were obliged to be brought sometimes by main force within reach of the holy water. At times asses were dragged by main force applied to their tails, going backwards with no very graceful steps to receive the blessing of St. Anthony. It seemed to a stranger as if the evil of all others most dreaded by the unwilling and unbelieving animals was their participation in this blessing of the saint. Altogether it was a strange and comical scene, and such a scene as could only be witnessed among a laughter-loving and superstitious people. The wildest and merriest scenes at Donnybrook fair have never surpassed the scenes at the church of St. Anthony. There is however this difference. In Donnybrook

there is no pretence to religion, and no mockery of religion, but in Rome the jugglers and mountebanks are priests, and all is done in the name of religion. Instead of the motley dress of a clown, there are the sacred robes of a priest. All is transacted at the doors of the church. The officiating parties are the priests of the church. The words of prayer are uttered—the form of blessing is pronounced—the holy water is sprinkled—the money is paid—the church of Rome patronizes the scene, and her priests and monks thrive upon the profits!

A friend of my own drove to the scene with his family. His coachman, a Roman, wished his horses to be baptized and blessed, it being generally believed among the populace, that unless a horse be thus blessed with the blessing of St. Anthony, it will fall or stumble or be otherwise liable to injury. The priest, seeing that the owner was English, attempted to impose on him, demanding *ten pauls* as his fee. My friend, who was a captain in the British Navy, refused, as he knew that the regular fee was only *two pauls*. The priest then began to bargain, and offered to baptize and bless the horses for *five pauls*. My friend again refused, and directed his coachman to drive on. The priest, seeing he could not impose on him, and that he was likely to lose the job, at last consented to perform all for the regular fee of *two pauls*. All this took place at the door of the church, on Sunday, and in the presence of all the people. My friend now yielded, having exhibited before the assembled multitude, their own priests and monks in their sacerdotal robes, and at their own church, bargaining for so many pauls for the blessing of St. Anthony; first knavishly demanding *ten*, and then descending to *two*!

In the afternoon, at a later period, many of the English

visited the scene. It was still more enlivened by the arrival of the horses and equipages of cardinals, princes, nobles, and others, in the most gorgeous trappings. The horses of his holiness the pope, and those of all the chief nobility, appeared and were baptized and blessed, so that the scene altogether was as gay and lively, as it was strange and ridiculous.

I was in the same neighbourhood the next day ; it proved one of the wettest and severest days of the season. The rain descended in torrents, and as they say at Rome, *quando piove, piove ; when it rains, it rains*. It was rain falling in such large heavy drops, that each drop as it falls upon the umbrella or on the ground, splashes widely around and seems to deluge the place. A perfect torrent in fulness and rapidity swept the road, and literally foamed as it rushed along ; no kind of ordinary protection of umbrella or waterproof was of any avail, as I wended my way homewards, wading in the water. The road or street seemed totally deserted by all but myself, till, as I passed on in my solitary way, I was surprised at seeing a regiment of cavalry approaching. The standard seemed carried furled at its head, and I perplexed myself in considering how the authorities could have selected such a day for parade.

The men and horses in their clothes and accoutrements were thoroughly saturated, and presented a most deplorable appearance. That however which on a nearer view first struck me with surprise, was, that the officer who rode at their head, carried, not the standard furled as I had at first supposed ; but an enormous candle ! It seemed composed of four very large candles, all made to adhere together, thus making one huge torch about the thickness of a man's arm. He held this as a marshal's baton in most military

style, as if he was proud of the honour of bearing it. Never did gallant youth in the days of chivalry, bear his ancestral banner more proudly in his first field of daring, than did this redoubtable dragoon of the church, with sword and helm and prancing charger, bear this prodigious candle at the head of the regiment. I was at first perplexed for a solution of the mystery ; but in a moment I remembered that on the preceding day, I had observed a candle frequently presented to the priest of St. Anthony, in return for the baptism of the animals. Was it possible that a whole regiment of dragoons was paraded on such a day for such a purpose ? A moment decided me. We were near the church, I hastened to the spot, I stood beside the officiating priest under the portico. The whole regiment defiled before the church, wheeling so as to bring each horse close to the priest, and I stood by as the priest gravely dipped his brush into the vessel of holy water, and baptised separately every horse in the regiment ! The officer remained close to us, still holding his gigantic candle and carefully watching that every one was sprinkled. I thought that they all had already been amply sprinkled in the deluge of rain, but alas ! though the rain came down from heaven it was not holy water ; so the officer, after seeing all correctly performed, wheeled his own charger round to the front of the portico, and there keeping it curvetting and prancing till the priest had sprinkled it three times, he presented to his reverence the important candle ; made a graceful salute, put his spurs into his horse, and galloped away, to take his place at the head of the regiment. All was done as gallantly and as formally as if he had been receiving the standard of the enemy, on a well-

foughten field, or returning with a fresh lance for a second course, at some courtly tournament.

The origin of this strange custom is not certain. It is called commonly "the benediction of the horses," and is generally believed to be of heathen origin. The Romans themselves usually so regard it, stating that it was customary in the races at the Circensian games, to sprinkle the horses. It was supposed to guard them against evil genii as they ran the race; and a legend is told of the horses of some Christians, having outstripped all the horses of the heathen, owing to their being sprinkled with holy water. Such a legend serves as a sanction of primitive Christianity to horse-racing, quite as much as to the use of holy water. The pagan custom soon became a papal custom, and falling in with the humour of the people and the patronage of Saint Anthony, who is usually pictured accompanied by a pig, and being conducive to the pecuniary interests of the convent of St. Anthony, the custom was continued under a new name, and "St. Anthony's day," and "the blessing of the horses," are thus identified.

There is some such story as this in the writings of St. Jerome; I add it here as I find it in Middleton.

"A citizen of Gaza, a Christian, who kept a stable of race-horses for the Circensian games, was always beaten by his antagonist, an idolater, the master of a rival stable: for the idolater, by the help of certain charms and diabolical imprecations, constantly damped the spirit of the Christian's horses, and added courage to his own. The Christian therefore, in despair, applied himself to Saint Hilarion, and implored his assistance. But the saint was unwilling to enter into an affair so frivolous and profane, till the Christian urging it as a necessary defence against these adver-

saries of God, whose insults were levelled not so much at him, as at the church of Christ, and his entreaties being seconded by the monks who were present, the saint ordered his earthen jug, out of which he used to drink, to be filled with water and delivered to the man, who presently sprinkled his stables, his horses, his charioteers, his chariot, and the very boundaries of the course with it. Upon this the whole city was in wondrous expectation. The idolaters derided what the Christian was doing, while the Christians took courage and assured themselves of victory ; till, the signal being given for the race, the Christian's horses seemed to fly, while the idolater's were labouring behind and left quite out of sight ; so that the Pagans themselves were forced to cry out that their god Marmas was conquered at last by Christ."

This absurd and senseless story is probably a forgery of the monkish editors of Jerome, inserted in his works to give a colour of his authority to their superstitions. At all events it may be urged as giving the authority of primitive Christianity in justification of horse-racing, quite as justly as in justification of the sprinkling of horses with holy water.

Some persons derive the use of holy water in the churches from the Jews ; but that it has been derived from the ancient heathens of Rome, is now very generally believed, and indeed is warmly defended by the intelligent ecclesiastics at Rome, on the principle, that as the heathen temples have been turned into Christian churches, so it was well to lay hold of the heathen practices and turn them into Christian customs ; thus reconciling the heathens to a change of religion, seeing it did not change their favourite rites and customs. At the entrance of the heathen temples there were vessels of water with which the votaries sprinkled

themselves as they entered to worship, and, as it seemed desirable to make as little difference as possible, so as to induce the heathens to conform the more readily to Christian worship, similar vessels of water, consecrated or made holy, were placed at the entrance of the Christian churches, and thus the custom has continued. Such at least is the origin generally ascribed at Rome to this practice, and such the principle on which it is defended by the men of mind and judgment among the priesthood. So far as the horses are concerned, the universal feeling of the lower classes of the Romans, is, that if the horses are not sprinkled with holy water, receiving the blessing of St. Anthony, they will stumble and fall under the rider, or suffer some other misfortune : and that all other animals are liable to suffer in this way, unless by this ceremony they are dedicated to St. Anthony and placed under his guardianship, which can be only done on this day and at this convent. The monks obtain a considerable income by this practice, and this seems to be the main reason of the continuance of the custom.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE USE OF PICTURES.

PICTURES, THE BOOKS OF THE UNLEARNED—DETAIL OF THE TEACHING EMBODIED IN THE PICTURES OF THE VATICAN—THE PARALLEL OR RIVAL PICTURES OF CHRIST AND MARY—THE EFFECT OF THIS—THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY—HER EXALTATION—HER CORONATION—HER CRUSHING THE SERPENT'S HEAD—THE TEACHING OF PICTURES, WITHOUT THE TEACHING OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

MIRACULOUS PICTURES—TWO CLASSES OF THESE—SOME OF MIRACULOUS ORIGIN—SOME WITH MIRACULOUS POWERS—INSTANCES OF BOTH KINDS—EXPLANATION OF THIS CHARACTERISTIC—SUPPOSED TO BE PAINTED BY ST. LUKE—THEIR DARK AND BLACK COLOUR—TWO REMARKABLE EXAMPLES OF MIRACULOUS PICTURES: THE MADONNA OF BOLOGNA, AND THE MADONNA OF ROME.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE USE OF PICTURES.

It has been already stated that the ignorance as to the contents of the Holy Scriptures, and even as to the existence as well as the nature of the sacred volume, is perfect and complete among the great body of the population of Rome. The same may be stated generally as to the population of Italy ; it being seldom that any person can be found who has the least idea of the Bible, beyond that of some book which it is forbidden to them to read, and which it is impossible for them to understand. And so stringent is the system of the officers of the customs, that it is impossible to introduce the volume from abroad ; as it would be seized as contraband ; and so watchful is the surveillance of the officers of police, that a bookseller would be immediately deprived of his licence if he sold the volume. The only effectual mode of introducing the Holy Scriptures in the Italian language, is for the Prussian and English visitors to take each a copy for his own use,

and then to leave that copy behind. A visitor will generally be permitted to introduce thus a single copy as for himself, and inscribed with his own name, though even this is frequently seized by the officials on the frontier. The result is, that no copy can be procured unless by stealth ; and therefore the ignorance of the population as to the contents of the sacred volume is as perfect and complete as if the Holy Scriptures had never been written. I have stated elsewhere my personal experience on a visit of search among all the bookselling establishments at Rome. In one and all, I was informed that the book was ‘ prohibited,’ or ‘ not permitted.’

But it has long been a favourite saying among the advocates of Romanism, that “ pictures are the books of the unlearned.” And it is a received maxim at Rome, that it is safer to teach by pictures than to teach by the scriptures,—that it is safer to teach by representing the personages and the facts of revelation in pictures, than to teach by a perusal of the narrative of the scriptures. Thus it is the wisdom of the church to enlighten the people by pictures, as the books of the unlearned, and to preserve them from error by forbidding the circulation of the scriptures.

Even supposing this principle to be sound and wise—even supposing for a moment that pictures are the easier and better books for the ignorant, it will at once be felt that it is the more necessary that all possible care should be taken that these pictures should teach nothing erroneous, nothing false, nothing absurd, nothing opposed to Scripture. When the Holy Scriptures of God are forbidden, and when pictures are substituted for the teaching of the people, there is an awful responsibility incurred by a church that forbids the reading of that which teaches only truth,

and circulates pictures which teach much that is erroneous, absurd, untrue and contrary to the Scriptures.

For example. In the palace of the Vatican, the residence of the Pontiff himself, is a series of frescoes in the gallery of maps. The following are among them :—

1. One represents St. Agatha. There is a representation of Mount Etna in fierce eruption, pouring forth volumes of fire, and rivers of flaming lava. The fiery stream is rushing down the mountain-side, and the flames seem capable of devouring a world. And then the gentle Agatha is seen approaching the river of lava, accompanied by a most adventurous and heroic band of monks and nuns ; and taking her miraculous veil from her face and applying it to the rushing flood, she wondrously stays the torrent of flaming lava ! An inscription beneath the picture attests the fact, and I have myself seen a portion of the wonder-working veil.

2. A second represents the house of Loretto. It is said that the Virgin Mary established, by a miracle, a house for her worship, and appeared in it by a miraculous image of herself and child. It is also said that, as the place which she selected was insensible to so great an honour, she resolved to change her residence ; and accordingly the house, the images, and all were miraculously carried away and established at Loretto, where her residence was duly appreciated. To teach this, a house with the image looking out of the window is represented as flying through the air, and supported by winged angels in its wondrous flight ! An inscription rebukes all scepticism as to the truth of the narrative.

3. Another teaches the story of St. Francis. It is narrated in the Roman Breviary, that this monk, being in the

island of Majorca, was desirous of visiting his brethren in the convent at Barcelona. Having neither ship nor boat in which to traverse the wide sea that rolled between, he fixed his monkish cloak to his pilgrim staff—laid them on the waves, and committing himself to these as a frail bark, he traversed some hundred miles in two hours, and arrived in safety at Barcelona! All this is carefully taught by the picture in the Vatican, and an inscription is added to verify the fact.

4. One represents the story of St. Anthony. This simple man, interpreting literally the words of our Lord, desiring his apostles to “preach the gospel to every creature,” conceived himself bound to preach to the fishes of the sea, as much as to the men of the earth, as all alike were the creatures of God. Accordingly he stood by the sea-side and preached to the fishes; and they, like the wild beasts of the forest at the music of the Pagan Orpheus, are said to have gathered together to the preaching of the Christian Anthony. At all events he is represented in the Vatican as standing beside the sea, with hands uplifted in preaching, and multitudes of fish of every kind are represented putting forth their heads out of the water, and frisking their tails to show their approval of the words of the preacher! In the back-ground several figures are represented as lost in astonishment at so wondrous a miracle, as well they might be, especially as an inscription certifies its truth.

5. There is another miracle on another class or order of created things. It is a miracle by St. Laberius, or Liborius. He is represented as compelling evil spirits to come out of persons and places, wherever he presents himself in the act of prayer. It is most expressively, but most hu-

morously represented by the figures of several little black devils with horns and hoofs and tails, scrambling away from the presence of the saint, and escaping with all possible despatch out of the window! All doubt as to the truth of this is also removed by an inscription.

6. Another represents an extraordinary piece of imposture—the stigmata of St. Francis. The saint is drawn on his knees in the solitude of a wood, and looking up to heaven with extended hands. Behind him the heavens seem to open, and the Saviour is seen, and from him descend rays of light to the hands, the feet, and the side of the monk, leaving there miraculously the stigmata or marks of the nails and spear, in the hands and feet and side of the monk, as they had been realized in himself on the cross; thus giving to St. Francis the appearance of enduring for us the same sufferings as Christ endured! This awful imposture is thus represented in the Vatican and certified by an inscription.

There are many representations of other events equally wonderful and equally true, in this gallery of the Vatican. They are done in fresco on the walls and ceilings, as a sort of permanent record of the wonders of the history of the church; and have a sort of authority stamped on them by their being in the papal residence, and by the inscriptions that are appended to each. The church of Rome takes away the Holy Scriptures, and she gives these pictures in their stead. And the people of Rome, deprived of that volume which teaches only truth, are referred to these pictures, where they can learn nothing that even bears a semblance to the truth. The book of truth is closed against them, and these pictures of falsehood are opened to them.

In the pictures of the Virgin Mary—in these “books of the unlearned,” by which the people are to be taught what they are to believe respecting the Virgin Mary, relatively to what they are to believe respecting Jesus Christ—there will be ample illustration of the present argument. It is customary in those “books of the unlearned,” to carry on a parallel between the life of Mary and the life of Christ; placing one, in all its details, on an equality with the other. And this too in the churches, in such a way that the people, seeing the narratives of the gospel respecting our Lord pourtrayed in pictures, and the legends respecting Mary also pourtrayed in pictures, and both presented to them alike, are naturally led to regard them alike, and to yield faith to one as implicitly as to the other. In their eyes one as much as the other is an article of faith, and the result is that they worship Mary, represented in one series, as much as Jesus represented in the other.

This system is carried much farther than might be anticipated. There is scarcely an incident in the life of our Lord, that has not its rival incident, or parallel, in the legendary life of Mary. For example :

A picture represents the angel announcing to Mary the miraculous conception of the Messiah. It is rivalled by another representing an angel announcing to Anna, the legendary mother of Mary, the miraculous and immaculate conception of Mary in the womb.

A picture represents the birth of our Lord. It is paralleled by another representing the nativity or birth of the Virgin Mary.

One picture represents our Lord as presented in the temple according to the law. It has its equal in another, representing a similar presentation of Mary in the temple.

If one picture represents the agonies of our Lord nailed to the cross, another represents the agonies of Mary, with seven swords or daggers piercing her breast.

If one represents our Lord in his death, with his sorrowing disciples around the body, it has its parallel representing the death of Mary, with the twelve apostles weeping around her.

If one picture represents the resurrection of our Lord, and the tomb from which he had risen, another represents the sepulchre of Mary from which she had risen, and in which flowers are spontaneously blossoming before the wondering eyes of the beholders.

If one picture represents the ascension of our Lord into heaven, there is another representing the similar ascension or assumption of Mary to the same heaven.

If there is one representing our Lord sitting on the throne and bearing the crown as King of kings, there is a rival picture representing Mary *sitting on the same throne*, bearing the sceptre, and wearing the crown as Queen of heaven.

There is thus a life of Mary parallel to the life of Christ—a miraculous birth, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation in heaven, as a rival to hold competition with the miraculous birth, resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ. The legendary fictions respecting Mary are placed on a parallel with the scripture narrative respecting Christ, and one is believed as implicitly as the other. In the exquisite church painted by Giotto at Padua, and in the beautiful church at Au, near Munich, the incidents of the birth, the life and death of our Lord, are painted on one side, and the similar incidents invented as a parallel, of the birth, the life and death of Mary, are pourtrayed on the

other side. And generally throughout Italy, if there be any incident connected with our Lord calculated to raise him in the affections or devotions of the people, it is immediately rivalled by a parallel incident, in order that Mary may not be supposed to be out-done, and may hold her place in the affections and devotions of the people.

The result is precisely what might be expected. The Holy Scriptures being totally excluded from circulation, their contents are altogether unknown. Pictures—"the books of the unlearned"—alone are read and known by the masses of the people. And thus they are taught that most frightful and appalling error of regarding the Virgin Mary, as the equal, and even the rival of Jesus Christ, in their religious affections.

But there are three legendary fictions, which are more frequent subjects of those pictures than any others. They all tend to the exalting Mary, and they are practically the three great articles of faith in the Romanism of Rome. These are the assumption—the exaltation—the coronation of the Virgin Mary.

I. The legend respecting her ASSUMPTION is this. It is taught that when she died like other mortals, and was laid in the tomb, to return to her kindred dust, she did not remain there, but as our Lord Jesus Christ rose the third day, and afterwards ascended into heaven, so, as it would not suit the system that our Lord should have done anything more wonderful than Mary, she too rose in like manner from the tomb, and while angelic spirits crowded around her, and bore her upwards in a flood of glory to the heavens, the very sepulchre itself gave evidence of the wonder, and flowers, more lovely than those which paganism has described as springing beneath the feet of Venus, are

said to have sprung miraculously from the marble tomb and filled all with loveliness and fragrance. This fable is narrated in the legend of Rome. It is taught by almost all her priests. It is believed universally by her people.

A subject like this is well suited to the painter. The portraiture of female loveliness, of face and of figure—the flowing drapery—the flood of glory—the angelic spirits—the opening heavens, all supply a magnificent material for the imagination of the painter and the very poetry of painting. All the artists from the least to the greatest, have spent their strength upon the subject. Titian, Guido, Murillo and others, have left incomparable specimens of the power of art in delineating this fable; and the very power with which they have delineated it—the very genius with which they have embodied it, only serves to attract the attention and rivet it on the mind of the beholder.

And this is the danger. The priesthood have placed pictures of this legend in almost every church, so that wherever the people worship they see this legend represented before their eyes—elevated above the altar at which they worship, so that it becomes impressed on their minds, as a part of their religious belief; and, having no books of the Holy Scriptures, and having only these pictures of their church to teach them, they must be more than human if such legends, so constantly presented to their eyes, with all the authority of their priesthood, and with all the sacredness of their altars, did not become part and parcel of their religious belief. As far as my experience went, I must state that I believe that a doubt as to the assumption of Mary would be regarded by the mass of the people as being quite as heretical as doubts as to the ascension of our Lord.

II. The next subject of an apocryphal nature, so frequently represented, is THE EXALTATION OF THE VIRGIN. As the legend describes her assumption into heaven, so it describes her body as not waiting for the general resurrection, to be then raised in glory, and united to her spirit as the common lot of humanity ; but as having at once passed, body and soul, from earth to heaven. Accordingly, she is represented as enthroned upon the clouds, cherubim and seraphim thronging around her ; little cherubs, with outstretched wings, holding music-books, and little seraphs with guitars, and trumpets, awakening the harmonies of heaven for her pleasure or her praise. Sometimes the gaunt figure of some celebrated monk, and the grizzled face of some sainted ascetic, are introduced, as gazing upon her young and beautiful face. Sometimes the gentle and sweet form and face of some creature of light and loveliness, is represented among them, forming a beautiful contrast to the rough and uncouth figures of monks and bishops. These male and female saints may have lived, and died, a thousand years after the Virgin, but they all stand or kneel together around her. The monk in his ugly cloak and cowl, the bishop with his crosier and mitre, and the female saint either in the robes of a nun, or in the brilliant damask of some courtly lady of the olden time.

There are some of the finest specimens of the power of painting appropriated to this subject. Raphael has expended his whole powers, and poured his whole soul into it ; and the results are wonderful as achievements of art. But he and all else laboured under a difficulty. That difficulty was so to represent the Virgin Mary, as that she might at once be recognised as distinct from the other female saints. Saint Catharine is distinguished in heaven

by her wheel. Saint Margaret is known by her dragon. Saint Cecilia is recognised by her musical instrument. And so the other saints are distinguished by the instruments of their deaths, or by other things connected with them in these legends. But how was Mary to be distinguished ? The most effective, though the most absurd, was chosen. She is always painted with the child Jesus in her arms ! This might all be well enough, while she was on earth, and while Jesus was a child ; but after he had finished his work, and ascended to heaven : and after she had grown old and died, to represent our Lord still in the heavens, not as the glorified majesty of the heavens, but as a little child in the arms of Mary ; to represent him still in the heavens, not enthroned above creation, but as requiring the care of Mary ; to represent him still in the heavens, not as the King of kings, and Lord of lords, but as a little child, subject to the will of Mary—to represent him thus, is as gross an absurdity as any other of which the Church of Rome has been guilty !

But it is more than an absurdity. It has a double evil. In the first place, it dishonours Christ, in making him a mere appendage, to distinguish Mary—a thing introduced to point her out, and of no value but as a label to Mary ; and thus as the mere secondary object of the picture. In the second place, it creates the impression on the mind, that Mary is the primary person in heaven, as being the primary object in the picture ; that she can not only influence, but *command* her child ; and this is precisely the tone of feeling actually generated by such pictures. The mass of the people pray before these pictures, and they ask of Mary, to whom the worship is addressed, to prevail on her child to grant their requests.

III. Another subject for their pictures, and one too of very frequent repetition, is the CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN. It is taught at Rome, that when Mary was assumed into heaven, it was amidst the rejoicings and the homage of the spiritual world. It is also taught at Rome that the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, received and welcomed her with unexampled honours ; and appointed her queen of angels and of saints, crowning her as the queen of heaven. This apocryphal event is called the Coronation of the Virgin. It is repeatedly represented in paintings, and even in sculpture. And in some of the churches of Rome, at certain festivals, the altar is changed into a stage, and by means of wax figures in splendid costumes, and with the assistance of the priests, the whole coronation of her image is enacted, to represent her coronation in the heavens. Whether this extraordinary legend is believed among the priests, it is impossible to say ; but it is most certainly one of their regular ceremonies.

Some of the greatest master-pieces of painting are designed to represent this apocryphal event. As specimens of exquisite taste and skill and beauty, the fresco by Beato Angelico, at St. Mark's, Florence, and the paintings by Raphael and Julio Romano in the Vatican, are incomparable. They are beautiful and wonderful productions, as the efforts of art. But, when viewed as pictures of religion—as “ the books of the ignorant ”—as designed to teach religion to the people—as a less dangerous mode of instruction than the Scriptures—when viewed in this light, they become objects of loathing and detestation. They all represent a throne or two thrones ; on these are seated alike two persons : a male and a female. They look like a king and his queen enthroned alike. There is embodied

and represented an equality between them, so far as male and female, as king and queen could be represented as equal. Their thrones are alike, their crowns are alike ; and the only difference is that the king is crowning his queen. The hand of Jesus touches the crown on the head of Mary.

This subject is often represented differently. There are two persons, representing God the Father, and God the Son, crowned and robed not unlike the pictures of David and Solomon. Enthroned between these two divine persons, sits Mary, and the hand of the Father on one side and of Christ on the other, are represented as placing the crown of heaven on her head, while the Holy Spirit is represented as a dove fluttering over the queen of angels and of saints.

When I first saw this subject thus pourtrayed in sculpture, I was shocked beyond measure. I felt it was an exalting of the creature to an equality with the Creator. I felt it was a real deification of Mary—a practical incorporation of Mary in the Trinity ; and my spirit was deeply moved within me. I soon learned that it was universally believed ; that the people having no Scripture in which to learn the truth,—having only these pictures as their books to teach them,—and having this subject so constantly before them in pictures and in theatrical representation, do actually believe in the crowning and queenship of Mary, as firmly as in the crowning and kingship of Jesus Christ.

It must again be borne in mind, that the objection here urged, is not in any degree connected with the accusation of idolatry, or with the charge of a tendency to idolatry, so generally attributed to pictures, when used for religion in our churches. That charge must stand or fall on other grounds than those here urged. The object in all the foregoing details is to shew the nature of the instruction

taught by pictures in Italy ; to shew that if pictures are “ the books of the unlearned,” they impart a species of teaching that certainly could not be found in the Holy Scriptures ; and that if the Holy Scriptures are to be forbidden, on the ground that they lead to erroneous opinions, then these pictures ought to be prohibited, on the ground that they teach that which is erroneous and untrue. It is a melancholy fact, and as awful as it is melancholy, that these fables, gross and senseless as they are—these fables of the miraculous conception—assumption—exaltation and coronation of the Virgin Mary, being constantly before the eyes of the people in their churches and on their altars, without having the Holy Scriptures as a corrective, are embodied in the religious faith of the masses of the people, and held with as assured conviction, as are the everlasting truths respecting the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

The manner in which, by the absence of a corrective power in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, these “ books of the unlearned ” are arranged to teach other and lesser items of doctrine, may be perceived, by the mode of teaching adopted in reference to the mooted point as to the seed of the woman that was to crush the serpent’s head.

It has been a point much canvassed, especially between the two churches in these countries, whether it is the Virgin Mary or Jesus Christ who crushes the head of the serpent. In the original promise, it seems certain that this is the act, not of the woman Eve, but of the seed of the woman ; and the question has been raised as to whether the seed of Eve points to Mary or to Jesus. They both were her seed, as descended from her, and the question

goes to determine which was the special seed referred to in the promise. In the Hebrew, the gender of the pronoun requires it should be referred to Jesus Christ: and the Protestants thus take their stand on the original Scriptures. In the Latin, used in the Church of Rome, the gender of the word requires it to be applied to the Virgin Mary; and the Romanists thus take their stand on the translation of the Scripture. As a point of criticism, it must of course be decided by the original Hebrew Scriptures, rather than by the Latin translation. And the great Christian truth—the great fact of Christianity justifies this, as it certainly was by Jesus Christ—by the bruising of Him unto the death of the cross—by the bruising His heel, i. e., by bruising his lower or inferior part, a fitting emblem of his manhood, which was his lower or inferior part, as compared with his Godhead,—it was by Jesus Christ that the serpent has been crushed; and it may therefore be inferred, that such was the event implied in the promise, and therefore that the true interpretation of that original promise refers to Jesus Christ and not to the Virgin Mary.

With a view, however, to exalt the Virgin Mary, it is maintained by her votaries, that it was Mary and not Jesus that crushed the serpent's head. This point, however, is mooted only in Ireland and England. In Italy there is no question respecting it. It is there a matter decided and beyond the reach of question. In at least ninety-nine pictures in every hundred, representing the crushing the head of the serpent, it is represented as the act of Mary. Indeed, more than this, I have never seen one representing it as the act of Christ; and yet I have certainly seen at least five hundred representing it as the

act of Mary. The practice may be said to be universal ; at least, in all the galleries of pictures, and in all the altar-pieces of churches which I have visited in every part of Italy, it is universal. And as these pictures of religion are the only books of religion read by the masses of the people, so this has become the universal belief of the people of Italy.

When it is asked, how and in what manner, and by what act has the Virgin Mary crushed the head of the serpent, it is answered by her votaries in England, that she has done so through her Son, Jesus Christ. But of this there is nothing in Italy. In every instance of the many hundreds I have seen, it is represented as the work of the Virgin Mary *alone*. To this I found only two exceptions, if indeed they can be regarded as exceptions, and these two I shall name as the only instances of the figure of Christ being introduced in the act.

The first of these is at Florence. In the gallery there is a large altar-piece, representing this subject. There is the Virgin Mary in full size, with her right foot on the head of the serpent, which is writhing under her. In this there is nothing but what is ordinarily seen ; the great peculiarity of the picture is, that she is represented as holding the infant Jesus by the hand ; and he, as a naked child, has his little foot placed on the foot of the Virgin—not on the head of the serpent, nor even touching the serpent, but on the foot of the Virgin. It thus appears as if the Virgin crushes the serpent, and the child is helping her. It is not that Mary crushes the serpent through her son Jesus, but it is that Jesus tries to crush it through his mother Mary. This is the more remarkable as it appears in the picture, for there the foot of the mother is represented as

large, and that of the child is represented as such a little tiny thing, as to awaken a smile at the idea of placing it on that of the mother. It looks as if the painter was trifling with his subject.

The second instance of this kind is at Ravenna. I visited it while waiting for the procession of *Corpus Christi*, about to issue from the cathedral, in a small church opposite, in which this picture is placed. It is a large altar-piece, representing the Virgin Mary crushing the head of the serpent by pressing it with her foot. The peculiarity of the picture is, that she is represented as having the child Jesus by the hand, and teaching Him to imitate her act. She is represented as crushing the serpent, and He is represented as a naked infant, with his small foot lifted up and his little face expressive of that half fear and half courage so common in children, in the act of going to give a desperate kick at the serpent. It is scarcely possible to look at the picture of the child, the attitude and the expression, without a smile, notwithstanding the sacredness of the subject.

Among the many hundreds of paintings in galleries, and in churches, and in convents, which we visited during a sojourn of nine months in Italy, we could discover only these two in which our Lord Jesus Christ is represented, as having any part in the crushing the serpent. In all the others, it is her foot *alone*, that is represented as performing the act, as if it were the act of Mary *alone*,—an act in which our Lord has no part whatever: and as these pictures are the only source from whence the people learn their religion, so it is their universal belief, that it is the Virgin Mary who has crushed the serpent's head.

And thus the people are taught! The Holy Scriptures,

those fountains of truth and light, are closed against them, on the miserable plea of charitably protecting them from falling into error, and their attention is called to these pictures—"the books of the unlearned," that they may read and learn in them, what certainly they never could have read or learned in the Holy Scriptures!

There can scarcely be named an idea more absurd and strange to the enlightened mind of England, than that involved in—A MIRACULOUS PICTURE. It seems the last extreme of knavish priestcraft to teach a belief in such things, as well as the last extreme of superstitious credulity to believe in them. And the conclusion at which men of common sense usually arrive respecting them, is either that the charge against the church of Rome for sanctioning such infamous impostures, is a sheer invention—a result of the *odium theologicum*, and a creation invented by antagonists to throw ridicule and scorn upon the church, or that, if indeed the charge be based on fact, then there is more knavery and priestcraft among the clergy, and more ignorance and superstition among the people of the church of Rome than had been anticipated.

There are two difficulties connected with this subject. One is the feeling that it is impossible—morally impossible that the priesthood of Rome could be so audaciously impudent as to teach a belief in miraculous pictures, and that it is also morally impossible that the laity of that church could be so stupid and degraded, as a belief in such things would seem to imply. The other difficulty greatly enhances this. It arises from the fact that the bishops and priests and laity of the church of Rome in England and Ireland, deny the existence of such miraculous pictures—deny a

belief in them—and even though the fact of their existence is as notorious at Rome as is the existence of the Pope himself, they never hesitate at a broad denial of every statement made respecting them. And thus, while the people of England are unwilling to believe the possibility of knavery and superstition so monstrous, the broad and unblushing denial of the members of the church of Rome comes with all the appearance of truth.

This matter therefore must be so stated as to set the question at rest, by narrating the facts as they exist, and the authorities by which they are justified.

There are two classes of MIRACULOUS PICTURES.

One class comprehends those *which are said to have had a miraculous origin*: that is, to have been painted in part or in whole by no human hands, but by an angel or some mysterious visitant from the world of spirits. The general story of all such pictures is, that the artist had painted all the figure and drapery, but found himself wholly unable to represent the face to his satisfaction; and in doubt and anxiety and even despair, if not very weariness, he fell asleep, and on awaking, behold! some angelic hand had perfected the picture! Such pictures are called miraculous on account of their miraculous origin. At Florence in the church of the Annunciation, there is a picture of the Virgin Mary attributed to Bartolomeo, but with her face miraculously painted by some angelic spirit; and this is formally stated in an inscription on the walls of the church. At Lucca in the cathedral church there is a representation of our Lord, and an inscription states that after his ascension our Lord appeared to Nicodemus, directing him to make an image of him. He succeeded in everything but the face, and this he gave up in despair. He fell asleep,

and on awaking, discovered that our Lord himself had miraculously completed it! But the most extraordinary relic of this class that I have seen, is the celebrated picture of our Lord, said to have been miraculously impressed on the handkerchief of Veronica. The legend states that as our Lord was led to be crucified, this saint gave him her handkerchief to wipe his face; He returned it with his face miraculously impressed upon it! This picture is exhibited before the Pope and cardinals on certain festivals, at St. Peter's, and is described elsewhere.

The second class of miraculous pictures is far more numerous, and comprehends all those *which have performed miracles*. At the church of St. Giovanni e Paolo near Rome, is a small picture of the Virgin Mary, which was seen to shed tears on the French invasion of Italy. At Arezzo we were shewn a picture in the cathedral church, which wept many tears at the language of some drunkards. It was a Madonna, and the bishop made it the means of collecting sufficient funds to build a new chapel to commemorate it. In the church of St. Pietro de Montorio is a singularly ugly representation of Mary and our Lord. Indeed it is positively hideous, but an inscription on a marble slab announces that "this sacred likeness of the mother of God, holding her son and a book, is illustrious for miracles more and more every day." In St. Peter's, however, is a very important one, not only for the miracle but for its authentication. It is in the subterranean chapel, usually called the Grotto. It is a picture of the Virgin with a mark under the left eye; and the following is the inscription:

"This picture of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, which stood between the pillars of the porch of the ancient Basilica,

having been struck by an impious hand, poured forth blood (*sanguinem fudit*) on the stone, which is now protected by a grating."

On one side is a large stone, on the other are two small stones. All three are covered with a strong iron grating to preserve them, as on them the blood of this miraculous picture is said to have fallen !

The existence of these pictures, thus authoritatively proclaimed to be miraculous by inscriptions on the walls of the churches where they are enshrined or exalted, is an important fact in forming an estimate as to the state of religion at Rome. They are naturally the favourite pictures among a superstitious people. The people prefer kneeling before them in prayer, to kneeling before other pictures. They prefer presenting their prayers to them. They prefer presenting their little votive offerings to them. They surround them, in preference to others, with their tokens of gratitude for prayers miraculously answered. The people undoubtedly regard them with a special and peculiar veneration, as is natural among those who can and do believe in either the miraculous origin or the miraculous powers of such pictures. They believe that there is something in them which is not in others—some mysterious charm or potency, by which the prayers offered before them are more acceptable, and more frequently as well as more speedily answered, than the prayers offered before other pictures that are not miraculous. Men of learning and of subtlety may create theories and invent explanations palliative of all this, but the fact will still remain, that among the masses of the people of Rome and of Italy in general, these "miraculous pictures" are not regarded as mere ordinary canvass and painting, but as things possessing

some mysterious power and divine influence which is not possessed by other pictures.

I asked of the priests at Rome an explanation of this, and from the two whom I asked, the same answer was given. It was this—that there was no divine power or mysterious influence in the picture itself, by which it could work a miracle; but that this picture was, for some unknown cause, a special favourite with the Virgin Mary; or that picture was in like manner a peculiar favourite with our Lord; and that the Virgin or our Lord, to shew their partiality for such pictures, sometimes wrought miracles for those who prayed before them or miraculously answered the prayers that were offered before them! They thus argued that the miracles were wrought, and answers miraculously given *before* these pictures, but not *by* them. Other explanation than this, I could never obtain.

The popularity of these pictures however is very fluctuating; for the miracles wrought by one become eclipsed by the miracles of another. A droll instance of this has taken place with respect to the Madonna of the Pantheon. She had long borne the palm among the miraculous Madonnas of Rome, and prayers and offerings and jewels of untold value, were freely poured into the treasury of the monks who had charge of her. But the monks of another establishment got up some well-managed miracles before the image of the Virgin Mary in the church of the Augustines, and now all the prayers and offerings of money and jewels are poured forth at her feet, and riches beyond counting are flowing into the treasury of the convent. The Madonna of the Pantheon is deserted, and the Madonna of the Augustines reigns the favourite of Rome!

These miraculous pictures are generally pictures of the

Virgin Mary, or rather of some female face supposed to represent that of the Virgin. Some of them are black, representing her *as a negress*; some are of a very deep and dark shade, as deep and dark *as an Indian*. But in some, where our Lord is introduced, the Virgin is painted *black* and our Lord *white*. A curious example of this may be seen in the Spanish collection at the Louvre, where the Virgin is represented as a black, and our Lord on her knee, as a white!

The origin of these pictures is unknown, and the reason of their peculiar colouring is unknown. The universal belief of the people, and the universal profession of the priests, is, that they were painted by St. Luke, the Evangelist. How they ascertained that he was a portrait-painter it is not easy to say; but they teach it as a matter of certainty; and he is frequently represented in pictures as in the act of painting the Virgin, who is quietly sitting for her likeness. I have in my possession a copy of one of these, and there is in the academy at Rome a very fine one attributed to Raphael. It is not possible however to see the pictures ascribed to St. Luke, without feeling that he was a very poor proficient at the art, as well as a very laborious one; and that the Virgin was quite as patient as she was black, and as ugly as she was amiable. I have myself seen about thirty portraits of Mary, all said to have been taken by St. Luke, and all representing her as very dark and very plain. I have heard of at least as many more.

There are two solutions of the difficulty, as to the origin of these singular pictures.

One is that which asserts, that at the beginning of the art of painting, between the time of Cimabue and Giotto, there lived an artist whose name was Luke. He was a

holy man, according to the holiness of his times, and confined himself to painting pictures of the Virgin Mary. Those pictures are certainly belonging to that age, as every judge of the art is aware ; and as this Luke was called the Holy Luke, i.e., Saint Luke, he soon became confounded by the roguish monks and ignorant people with Saint Luke the Evangelist. This is a very probable solution of the difficulty as to the origin of these pictures, and the dark colour of some of them may be accounted for by their great antiquity ; some of them being smoked with incense and lamps, and very dirty ; and if cleaned would perhaps be not much darker than the pictures of some other artists in the same infancy of painting.

But yet there are many of those pictures, which cannot be accounted for on this hypothesis. I am disposed to ascribe to these a very different origin. On the final destruction of the Christian Churches in Africa, many Christians fled to Italy and brought these pictures with them. At a still later period many who had gone on pilgrimage to the Holy land, and many who had joined in the crusades, and later yet, many who fled to the West from the armies of the Turks, brought with them from the East pictures representing Mary, representing her as of the deep and dark colour not unusual in the East, while those from Africa brought portraits shewing Mary as of the African colour. I have myself seen a crucifix in the Island of St. Domingo, on which the figure of our Lord was extended as large as life, painted perfectly black, as the blackest negro ; and he was so painted by the negroes themselves. It was no more than natural they should regard him as like themselves. In the same way the pictures in Italy may be regarded as painted in Africa or the East, and afterwards

brought to Italy, where certainly they are very curious, not only for their colour, but also as specimens of the infancy of the art. They are generally regarded by the people as miraculous, and, as painted by Luke; and the reputation for sanctity, which they have obtained, has led to their imitation. Among the mountains of Switzerland, a little beyond the great convent of Engleberg, and close under Mount Titlis, I observed erected by the side of the path, a little figure of the Virgin and child. She was painted as a negress!

The degree of reverence with which these pictures are regarded among the people, and the amount of sanction given by the authorities of the Church of Rome, will be best and most truly exhibited by a detail of particulars.

I. The Madonna by St. Luke at Bologna. Bologna is the most important city in the Papal states. It is superior to Rome in public spirit, in trade, and indeed in almost every respect, but that of being the seat of government. Its inhabitants are industrious and thriving; and they are restless and impatient under the Papal government. But Bologna must possess its miraculous picture, and therefore Bologna rejoices in the possession of a Madonna by St. Luke.

I resolved to see it; my pilgrimage were incomplete without a visit to one of the most remarkable shrines and one of the most miraculous pictures in Italy. And truly it is in itself a journey well befitting the palmer and his scallop-shell; and the devout and believing from every part of Italy, make long and painful pilgrimages to this picture. The convent to which it is attached, is at some distance without the walls of Bologna; it is situated on a very lofty hill, extremely difficult of ascent. Much has been done however to render it accessible to the pilgrims;

the approach is by a colonnade of extraordinary length, covering the pathway, which is so steep, as to require a flight of steps a large portion of the way, and so continuous is this, that without the slightest pause even for a moment, it occupied twenty-five minutes' ascending the steps. There are all the usual representations of our Lord's sufferings in fresco in the colonnade. It contains 690 arches, and besides the steep ascent without steps, some portions of the way are so steep as to require 514 steps.

At the top of this hill is an old and extensive convent, with a small but handsome church. Within this church, over the high altar, and enclosed in a large case like a cupboard or bookcase, made of brass, gold and silver, was "the miraculous image of the Most Holy Virgin, painted by St. Luke." There were about 50 pilgrims in the church, performing their vows to this picture, which was not visible, having been carefully locked up in the case! It is said that such pictures excite devotion, by representing certain saints to our eyes and our minds; but there was no picture visible here, and *the people were literally praying to a picture which they had never seen!*

This might satisfy the vows of the native pilgrims, but there was among them, in my own person, a stranger pilgrim whose desires were not so easily satisfied. After some little trouble with the officials of the convent, I obtained for the curiosity of the pilgrim of heretical England, that which could not be granted to the devotion of the pilgrims of catholic Italy. So sacred is this miraculous picture, that it can never be exhibited unless with candles burning to its honour; accordingly four candles were immediately lighted before it. It is also necessary that a priest should attend and exhibit it, as the attendance of a lay

official would not be regarded as sufficient honour. Accordingly, when at my request, the candles were lighted and the priest robed, he beckoned me to approach ; I was conducted within the sanctuary to the steps of the altar ; then, ascending a small step-ladder so as to place me on a level with the picture, the priest unlocked the case, and I was enabled to examine it with as much accuracy as I desired. He expatiated much upon it as a work of art, and dwelt especially on the beauty of its eyes, and above all on the splendour of the jewels, amethysts and emeralds, rubies and diamonds, which were disposed in vast profusion as a crown upon the head, as a necklace on the neck, as an ornament upon the breast. If the jewels were real, they must be valued at several thousand pounds. The colouring of the picture was very dark, deeper than any olive, and dark as the darkest mulatto. The eyes had the peculiar shape to be seen in Cimabue's pictures, and indeed in all those of that age down to the time of Giotto ; and to that age, instead of the Evangelist's, must this picture be ascribed. Having satisfied my curiosity, I descended the step-ladder, and saw all the pilgrims in deep and devout prostration before that which the priest and myself had been so closely criticising. They had devoutly prayed to it, while yet invisible in its closed case ; they now as devoutly worshipped it presented to their view.

I purchased from an attendant, an authorized history of this " miraculous image." It is entitled " an Historical view of the *Picture of the Virgin Mary, painted by the Evangelist St. Luke*, preserved and venerated on the Mount della Guardia." This document bears the signature of the Inquisitor General, giving its authorization in 1840.

After some account of its history, this paper goes on to describe its arrival at Bologna. The following are extracts.

“ Let every devout soul imagine the fulness of joy that overflowed the heart of the good hermit, and how affectionate were the thanks which he rendered to the Most Holy Virgin, for her having finally heard his vows, and fully accomplished his ardent and righteous desires. On the morrow, letters were given by the ambassador directed to the pretor and consuls of the city (of Bologna,) with a servant to accompany him, and a horse for the convenience of the good Teocle, for all which he thanked the ambassador, mounted the horse, and with tears of comfort commenced his journey to Bologna.

“ Having arrived at the city, they bring him to the pretor and consuls, and he delivers to them the letters of the ambassador. Having read them, they made much reception for the hermit, and they wished to hear from himself the recital from the beginning, and the success of the affair. When he had concluded the recital, he uncovered the Holy Picture, and all burst forth with great devotion in words of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for so precious a treasure, as he had condescended to give them. *It appeared as if piety, devotion, and every virtue, with all prosperity and happiness, had passed together with this Holy Picture from Constantinople to Bologna.* There were accordingly ordained, with the consent of the bishop Gerardo, solemn processions for three days in the city, in which the bishop with all the clergy, both secular and regular, all the magistrates and trades, together with all the devout people, took part ; all gathered together in unusual numbers, and with an unusual number of lights. On the third day there was a most solemn procession even to the Mount della Guardia, where, with the clergy, magistrates and people, the Most Holy Picture was carried with all

solemnity by the good hermit, and placed upon the altar of the chapel of St. Luke."

The miraculous picture having been thus deposited in its destined place—a place pointed out by miraculous words to the hermit, and to which he was guided by miraculous leadings, till his mission was accomplished,—it became customary with the church from that period to load this picture with all honours, and among them with the honours of a coronation.

"Afterward they carried the Sacred Picture in the city to the different churches, that a solemn mass might be sung before it. In the year 1603, and on the 4th of May, the Sunday before Rogation, the most blessed Virgin of St. Luke was crowned by the archbishop of Bologna with a crown of gold, with the noblest display and solemn pomp, in a canopy superbly prepared. It was done with the assistance of the clergy, senate, magistrates, and the whole body, spiritual and temporal, of the city, and with an innumerable assemblage of devout persons."

And as all this gives the impress of authority to the miraculous character of this picture, so on every occasion of earthquake, famine, or pestilence, it has been produced and carried in procession to stay or mitigate the evil by its miraculous interposition. The "historical narrative" from which this information is derived, contains a detail of fifty occasions on which this miraculous picture was publicly resorted to by the clergy, magistrates and people. For example:—

"1633. In the month of May there were horrible earthquakes, by which many houses were cast to the ground, and in June the sun was obscured at midday in the same manner as if it were night; and besides this,

there were incessant rains and horrible tempests which threatened great distress. On account of the urgency, they made many processions to cause the troubles to cease, and they carried our Holy Picture through the city." Again,

" 1796. On the 17th of September on the Sabbath, on account of the mortality that prevailed among the cattle, it was carried to St. Petronius, and there exhibited till another Sabbath, &c." Again,

" 1800. On the 6th of March it was carried to the church of St. Petronius on account of various necessities, and especially in order to obtain serenity of atmosphere. On the 16th after midday the blessing was given with the Holy Picture at the steps of St. Petronius." Again,

" 1834. On the 9th of October, in order to remove the terrible scourge of the earthquake which was felt in the evening of the 4th of that month, through the city and whole diocese, and in order to obtain the necessary supply of rain, it was afresh carried into the church of St. Petronius. His Eminence the most reverend the Cardinal archbishop, with the regular and secular clergy, with all the civic authorities, and an infinite multitude of the people, went to meet the Holy Picture, and to venerate it during the three days it remained there; and they accompanied it in the afternoon to where the blessing was given for the greater grandeur at the fore-named church, &c."

There are fifty instances given wherein this miraculous picture was resorted to, in order to obtain miraculous assistance in time of need. And these instances run through a period of some centuries, concluding with one so late as the year 1834; thus shewing that even within the last few

years the priestcraft of the priesthood and the superstition of the people, are quite as rife and rampant as ever. And all these details have been published with the signature of the Inquisitor General in the year 1840 !

II.—The Madonna by St. Luke at Rome.

The most important of all these miraculous pictures is that preserved in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome. It is a picture of the Virgin, and is said to have been also painted by St. Luke. It is in the Borghese chapel, and is visible only on certain appointed days, and even then only at certain services.

The light in which this picture is regarded not only by the ignorant and superstitious, but also by the educated classes and by the authorities of the church of Rome, may be inferred from the marble tablets fixed in the walls of the church relating to it.

“ Paul V., Chief Pontiff, prepared and beautified this decorated place for the venerable picture of the Mother of God, painted according to ancient and certain fame by the hand of St. Luke the evangelist, and he directed it to be exhibited to the faithful for their worship.”

It is added further on in this Inscription,

“ Paul V., extending to all the faithful in Christ, who are truly penitent, and have confessed and received the holy sacrament, and who visit this church and Sacred Picture itself, on the last Sunday in January, as well as on any other octave, and who pray there in the manner of the church,—conceded for ever in the Lord by apostolic authority a plenary indulgence and remission of all their sins.” The words are “ plenariam omnium peccatorum indulgentiam et remissionem apostolica autoritate perpetuo in

domino concessit.” These words are sufficiently ample, in all conscience. It is added on a second tablet,

‘ That the soul shall obtain an indulgence in the manner of the church, out of the treasury of the church ; so as that the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, being applied to him, he may be freed from the punishment of Purgatory, we concede and indulge for ever.’

These are the authoritative bulls or papal rescripts respecting this picture. And as they not only encourage devotion and worship to it, extending a plenary indulgence of all sins to those who devoutly visit it, and as they direct it to be exhibited on certain days for the worship of the people, so it must be concluded that this is an authorized matter. It cannot be sneered at, as the ignorance of the ignorant, or the superstition of the superstitious. It must be regarded as an authorized worship in the church of Rome.

There is a great difficulty experienced by Protestants in England, when they speak of these things, to shew that they are not merely the foolish customs of the more simple or ignorant members of the church of Rome, but the authorized practices of the most educated among them. And it is to remove this difficulty that these and the following documents and facts are given.

There have been two great events connected with this miraculous picture by St. Luke, and in both of them the late Pope Gregory XVI., with all his cardinals, bishops, monks &c., have taken the most decided part. One was the carrying this picture in procession, that its miraculous power might check the *cholera morbus*. The other was the offering of a crown to the picture ;—the Pope himself

conducting the service and crowning it with his own hands. The latter has been already noticed among the "high ceremonies." The former shall now be detailed.

An account of this procession was published at Rome at the time by the Abbè Menghi d'Arville, and is entitled "Historical narrative of *the miraculous picture* of the blessed Virgin, painted by St. Luke and venerated at S. Maria Maggiore, carried in procession at Rome in September, 1835." This narrative was published with authority, and contains the following account of the miraculous picture itself.

"The colours of this miraculous picture are preserved sufficiently well. I have had the consolation of seeing it on many and various occasions, and I can here attest with most religious sincerity, that the sight of it has produced in me feelings of which I experience the delicious impression every time that I think upon it. In short I believe it is difficult to pray for any length of time in the presence of that holy picture. While contemplating it, one feels borne away into sweet meditations, which ravish the soul and penetrate it with a love of all the virtues; and above all, with that purity, which that incomparable Virgin possessed in so high a degree. Now if the simple expression of the portrait of Mary makes us experience these feelings, of what nature would they have been, which her presence must have produced in those fortunate men who had the happiness of seeing herself!

"In order to form some faint idea, I recite here an extract from that sublime letter *which Saint Dionysius the Areopagite wrote to the Apostle Paul* after he had seen the mother of God.

" 'I have been presented,' he writes, 'to the incompara-

ble Virgin. Her aspect *all-divine*, surrounded me with celestial splendour, and has darted into my soul a flash so pure, and has filled me so with the odour of all the virtues, that neither my miserable body nor my prostrate spirit could bear the immense weight of that happiness. The use of my senses abandoned me, and the powers of my mind were prostrated at the sight of the glory of that sublime majesty. O God, who didst dwell in that august Virgin ;—Thou art my witness, that if I had not been instructed in thy divine precepts, I had imagined that she WAS THE DEITY ITSELF, for I was unable to conceive a greater happiness, even in the blessed, than that with which I was intoxicated, all-unworthy as I was, in that fortunate moment.’ ” *

So much will suffice for a description of the picture itself. Another extract will illustrate its miraculous character :

“ In order to recount the miracles wrought by the intercession of the Holy Virgin, *when invoked under the auspices of her picture venerated at the church S. Maggiore*, it would be necessary to compile the records of all nations where these miracles are contained ; for the whole universe, which

* The citation of this letter, as an historical document, by a Romish divine, publishing his work “ by authority,” at Rome itself, at the present day,—is a good example of the unscrupulosity of these writers, in dealing with facts. Dupin, the eminent Romish historian, in shewing that *none of the writings* attributed to Dionysius, were really written by him, says, “ the writer affirms that he was present at the death of the Virgin Mary : but Dionysius was not converted at that time, for she is held to have died fifteen years after the crucifixion, and St. Paul, whose preaching converted Dionysius, came not to Athens till *seventeen* years after that event.” Dupin’s final judgment is, that “these writings were forged about the end of the fifth century, or beginning of the sixth.”

God has created for his own glory, seems to have become a vast temple where he has taken delight in manifesting *the power of his divine Mother*, in behalf of all those who fly to her *through means of that worshipful picture*. And the church which contains it, has irrefragable proofs of this truth, as glorious to Mary as it is consoling to the faithful.”

But as the limits of this writing do not allow me to enter into a detail of this matter, I shall cite here only one miracle, suitable in a special degree to the subject of this narrative. It is that which happened under the pontificate of St. Gregory the Great. Observe how the historians recount the facts.

“They had at Rome a great proof of the protection of the Holy Virgin, under the pontificate of St. Gregory the Great. That holy Pope could discover no means, by which to arrest the course of a great pestilence, which had wrought frightful ravages in the city, *except the invocation of the mother of God, and recourse to her compassion*. Never had the plague been so cruel, never had there been witnessed calamity so terrible. Every day thousands of persons died, the greater part of them being suddenly snatched away by the fury of the disease. Although the Holy Pontiff had preached repentance, had ordained prayers, had made vows, the plague ceased not its ravages, *until he took the resolution of turning altogether to the Mother of God*. Then he commanded the clergy and people to go in procession to the church of our Lady, called S. Maria Maggiore, and that they should carry the picture of the Holy Virgin painted by St. Luke, to the church of St. Peter at the Vatican. *The procession perfectly arrested the progress of the pestilence: it was a delightful miracle to behold how the pestilence ceased entirely along the streets*

through which the picture passed. And before the conclusion of the procession, there was seen upon the terrace of Adrian, then called the castle of St. Angelo, an angel in human form, sheathing a bloody sword within its scabbard ; and at the same time were heard the heavenly spirits, singing in honour of the Holy Virgin, &c.”

So much for the miraculous character of this picture ; and now for the sanction which has been given to all this by the late Pope, who ordained the procession of 1835, and himself personally accompanied it.

“Enthusiasm was at its height, when the miraculous picture appeared in its place in S. Maria Maggiore. The *Evviva Maria !* at that moment reached even to the heavens. Mary enters into her privileged temple. They place the august picture upon the pontifical altar. The Litanies are chaunted, and THE HOLY POPE, assisted by Cardinal Odeschalchi, High Priest of the church, OFFERS INCENSE TO IT, and utters a prayer full of sweet hope, while all his countenance displayed the expression of it, *that Mary had heard the vows and prayers of her people.*”

In this extraordinary procession of this “miraculous picture,” the Pope, the Cardinals, the high officials, the monastic orders, &c. took their respective parts ; and thus the whole authority of the church of Rome was given, with the fullest sanction, to this procedure, even so recently as the year 1835. If therefore we are told that there are no such things at Rome, as pictures supposed to be miraculous—or that they are not sanctioned by the authorities—or that such pictures are not supposed to have any special and mysterious properties,—we reply by simply adducing the facts just narrated.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE USE OF IMAGES.

THE USE OF IMAGES IN RELIGION—LESS GENERAL THAN THE USE OF PICTURES—I. THE IMAGE OF PETER—THE MANNER OF ITS WORSHIP—ITS WORSHIP BY THE POPE, DESCRIBED—ITS WORSHIP BY KINGS, DESCRIBED—ITS WORSHIP BY THE PEOPLE, DESCRIBED—II. THE IMAGE OF THE VIRGIN—ITS APPEARANCE AND VOTIVE OFFERINGS—THE MANNER OF ITS WORSHIP—III. THE IMAGE OF OUR LORD—ITS FORMER WORSHIP AND PRESENT DESERTION—IV. THE BAMBINO—SCULPTURE CONTRASTED WITH PAINTING IN REFERENCE TO RELIGION.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE USE OF IMAGES.

It is difficult to settle the nomenclature of some things. The last thing which a good man would willingly do, is to give needless offence by the use of terms and the application of names. And however strongly he may feel that wrong has been done, he will yet also feel that in detailing that wrong, he ought to avoid, as far as possible, the use of any language that might reasonably offend. This will be the more necessary, when it is considered that the *wrong* may be done under the impression that it is *right*.

In the religious writers of the Church of Rome, in Italy, there is a large variety of terms employed to express the acts and feelings of her members, in reference to the images of God, and the images of the Saints. Thus we hear of the *veneration* of images, the *worship* of images, the *adoration* of images. And the manner in which this feeling, under whatever name it is called, is manifested, is by bowing and kneeling before them, and praying before

them, sometimes kissing them with the lips, sometimes touching them with the forehead, and sometimes presenting candles, flowers and money to them. All this is so well-known, and so daily and hourly witnessed, and looked on as so large a portion of the religion of Italy, that no offence is ever given or taken, by speaking of it as the *veneration* or *worship* or *adoration* of Images. But it is far otherwise in England, where on account of the strong feeling against the use of images, the members of the Church of Rome are peculiarly jealous, and even captious, as to every word that is employed to express their religious acts and feelings in reference to images.

In detailing therefore the aspect of those religious phases of the Church of Rome, in connection with the use of images, which were presented to our eyes in Italy, it is my earnest desire rather to describe what I saw than what I felt, and thus to let the *thing* itself, rather than the *name* of the thing, stand fairly before the eyes of the reader. On other points I would freely express my thoughts and feelings ; but on this, to avoid offence, I shall only describe the facts, and employ customary terms without intending to convey anything that could reasonably offend.

The use of images is not so general as the use of pictures at Rome, or generally throughout Italy. This appears to arise from the far greater facility of procuring the latter ; but, at all events the number of images, which are the objects of veneration, or worship, or adoration, and before which the people kneel and pray, and to which they make their vows, and pay their offerings, is much less than the number of pictures. It is true that every such picture is regarded by many persons as an image or idol ; but I especially apply the name of image to those repre-

sentations, that are in the form of statues, as opposed to paintings.

The principal of these are four, not indeed in the extent of the worship, but in the authority by which that worship is sanctioned :—

I. The first and chiefest of all, is the statue or image of Saint Peter. It is placed in the church named after that apostle, in one of the most prominent positions, so that no one can approach the high altar, or enter the transept without seeing it. It is elevated on a bold marble pedestal; it is formed of bronze, and is a sitting figure; the face is severe and stern; the right hand is lifted as if in the act of blessing with the two fore-fingers and thumb according to the papal form; the left hand holds two great keys.

It is believed by many, that it was originally the image of Jupiter, which received the worship of the Romans in Pagan times: and it is said, that the thunderbolts—for it was a Jupiter Tonans—were removed, and the keys substituted in their place; and thus the pagan god became a papal saint, and the image that in ancient days received the homage of the Romans, still receives the like homage from their present descendants. The truth of this opinion has been justly questioned, some alleging that such a change or transfer has never had any existence, except in the imagination of writers; and others aver it as a fact, and justify it as a holy deed, to seize the appliances of a false religion, and consecrate them to the promotion of the true; arguing that as heathen temples became christian churches, so the images of heathen gods became the images of christian saints.

The manner of its worship is by kneeling before it,

praying to it, and kissing its foot : and this worship is paid to it by all orders and classes. We have witnessed the Pope himself, the cardinals, the archbishops, bishops, priests, monks and friars, and all classes of ecclesiastical persons, bow, and worship, and kiss it. We have also witnessed kings, queens, princes, dukes, nobles, and all ranks and orders of society, bow and worship before it and kiss it. It is the universal practice of the Romans. On one occasion, we went to St. Peter's, to witness the Pope himself, as the head of the church, paying worship, or homage, or reverence, under whatever name men delight to call it, to this image of bronze. He came attended in full state, by the cardinals and all his court. He was surrounded by his guards, who kept sufficient space around the image. He approached reverently, while a chamberlain or other officer carefully wiped with a handkerchief the toe of the image. The Pope bowed lowly before it, till his head was lower than the projecting foot of the image. He then raised his head very gently, till it touched the sole of the foot. In this position, with the foot of the image on his head, he made his reverence, moving his lips as if in prayer, and remaining for a short time thus humbled, under a semblance of prayer, he concluded by changing the position, kissing the great toe of the image, then, touching it with his forehead, he passed away to kneel before the high altar. All the cardinals followed, bowing to the image, and kissing its foot. All the archbishops and bishops—all the priests and other officials of the court followed their example, and passed on in like manner.

This scene, so formal and so public, set at rest all doubts as to the sanction of the church of Rome given to this

idolatry. It was the act, not of a simple, ignorant, or superstitious populace, giving way to feelings against the better teaching of their priesthood; but it was the formal and public act of the head of the church of Rome, accompanied by all its authorities.

On another occasion we attended to witness the same act of idolatry committed by the King and Queen of Naples, and several persons of their suite. On former occasions we were much struck, and indeed affected, by the plain and simple bearing of this king and queen; we had seen them enter St. Peter's and move about just like any other quiet persons in the church. There were many hundreds of persons present, for it was the Holy Week, and all were making a lounge of St. Peter's, to hear the music, and see the sights, and meet their friends; or to obtain the indulgences accruing to all who are in attendance during certain ceremonies. The king and queen moved about as plainly and simply as others, admiring what struck them, affecting no state, assuming no superiority, and occasionally kneeling on the marble floor among the meanest and poorest of the populace, as if they really felt that "there is no respect of persons with God." And in all this there was nothing of that affectation of humility which is even more offensive than the display of superiority. It was a plain, and honest, and sincere simplicity, as creditable to them to exhibit, as it was pleasant to us to witness, in that city of affected humility and real hypocrisy. As the royal pair approached the image of St. Peter, they bowed reverently, and then approaching, kissed the foot and retired. It was a painful thing to see those, who, with good instruction, might be capable of better things, bowing down to this senseless idol.

This scene, however, was important, for there were many of the princely and the noble of Italy present on that day ; and we observed, that almost every Roman of every rank paid homage and offered worship to the image. It proved, what we were previously slow at believing, that this idolatry was not confined to the ignorant and superstitious populace, but was the sin of every class, even of the educated, in the land.

On many occasions we paused, at various seasons, on ordinary days, and on fête-days, to observe the worship of this image by the lower classes. Among them it is universally an object of worship—of religious worship, to such an extent, that whenever they enter St. Peter's, they would regard it as quite as sinful to withdraw without worshipping the image, as to withdraw without worshipping the Host on the altar. On passing "the altar of the Holy Sacrament" they invariably kneel, repeat a short prayer and so pass on ; and on passing the image of St. Peter they as invariably kneel, repeat a short prayer, kiss the toe and pass on. There may be difference or variety of intention and devotion in the heart, and that is known only to that God, before whose eyes "all things are naked and open ;" but there is no difference or variety whatever in the outward act of worship. The human eye can see no difference between the worship paid to the consecrated host, as the present God, and that paid to the brazen image, as the representation of St. Peter. No man can look on the devotion of the simple people without feeling that whatever be the intention, the act is idolatry.

These scenes so often witnessed, left a painful impression on our minds, as shewing that at Rome "the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint," and that it

is sadly and distressingly true, that no class or order of men in that church as exhibited in Rome, can be regarded as exempt from the words, "there is no soundness in it." From the Pope himself to the humblest friar, and from the proudest noble to the poorest peasant, the whole land is defiled with this Idolatry. So constantly has the image been kissed, that the great toe has been so worn away, that they have been obliged to cover it with brass !

II. The Image that comes next in importance, is that of the Madonna of the Augustinians. It stands in the church belonging to the monks of the order of the Augustinians. It is called "the miraculous Image," from its being supposed to possess the power of working miracles, of which many are formally attested.

As a work of art it is truly execrable, and looks like the figure-head of a collier or coasting-vessel. It is a sitting figure as large as life, and has the image of a child in its arms. The figure of Jesus is of no importance, being introduced merely to distinguish the figure of the Virgin Mary from all others. She is represented as a very coarse, plain, and dark woman, far more calculated to repel than to excite devotion. But that which was lacking in the image itself, was amply compensated in the finery in which it was vested. The gaudy display of white and blue and crimson silks and satins was no more than common on such occasions ; but the display of diamonds upon black velvet far surpassed all belief. The waist—the stomacher—the arms—the neck and the head were one blaze of diamonds, relieved by amethysts, topaz, pearls, and rubies. The tiara or head-dress of diamonds would befit the brow of a sovereign ; and the whole glistening in the light of the many lamps that burn day and night before her, for

richness and brilliancy would seem to proclaim her "Queen of Heaven." It is understood that the diamonds and other gems are worth many thousand pounds sterling. They certainly are very magnificent, though many persons may regard their magnificence as misplaced. Little however can be said of the taste exhibited, as all seemed arranged for the mere display of her riches.

This Image is erected where the great door of a church is usually placed, and it is therefore exactly opposite the high altar. At one end of the church is the altar, at the other end is the image; the church being entered by two doors, one at each side of the Image. The effect of this position is, that those who worship the host on the high altar, must turn their backs on the image, and those who worship the image, must turn their backs on the host. And it is a strange sight, at times, to witness the worshippers in that church, one portion devoutly kneeling to the host as Jesus Christ, on the high altar during the mass, with their backs towards the Virgin Mary; while another portion, as devoutly kneeling to the image of the Virgin Mary, turn their backs on the host as Jesus Christ. On some days the majority will be seen worshipping Christ, on others the majority are worshipping Mary. This however only applies to the time of mass, as during all the rest of the day the congregation are essentially the worshippers of the image. And no unprejudiced person entering the church would form any other opinion than that this image of Mary was the presiding goddess or divinity, and that the church was the temple of her worship.

The mode in which she is worshipped, is by kneeling before her. There they repeat certain prayers, each person choosing his own, though there is an authorised one

printed and suspended at each side of her. When they have concluded this devotion, which I have seen at times performed with the eyes of the worshipper intently gazing on the eyes of the image, they rise, approach the image, kiss the foot with the lips, place their offering, generally a piece of money, in a box at her feet, then inserting the finger in the oil of the lamp burning beside her, they cross and bless themselves, and after kissing a small picture hanging beside her, they retire. So many are those that kiss the foot of the image, that the toes were worn away, and the monks have been obliged to envelope the whole foot in a sort of stocking of brass, which presents a curious contrast to the rest of the image !

A small memoir has been authorised at Rome, in reference to this image ; it is entitled “Memoir of the miraculous cures and other distinguished graces wrought by God at the intercession of the most Holy Mary—whose sacred image is venerated in the church of St. Augustine at Rome—1831.” From this I extract the following prayer to be addressed to the image.

“Most Holy Virgin, Mother of the incarnate Word, treasury of grace, and refuge of us miserable sinners ; full of confidence we have recourse to your maternal love, and ask of you the grace that we may always do God’s will and your will. We commit our hearts to your most holy hands. We ask of you both spiritual and bodily health, and we trust most confidently that you, our most loving mother, will grant our petitions, interceding for us. And with a living faith we thrice say—Hail Mary !”

“His holiness our Lord Pope Pius VII., of holy memory, conceded an indulgence of three hundred days to all the faithful who devoutly recite the forementioned prayer.”

This prayer, and the indulgences attached to it, will best illustrate the nature of the worship of this image.

But the strangest part of the worship is the votive offerings which are made to the image. These sums of money are so great, increasing every moment of the day, by small but numerous additions, that the monks are obliged constantly to make a clearance, which they do, as may be supposed, with hearty good will. But many of the votaries leave trinkets, as rings, bracelets, &c., instead of money; and many of these are arranged around her shrine as an incitement to the worshippers, and an example for their pious imitation. I had the curiosity to reckon the number of rings thus arranged, and some were magnificent diamonds, some noble rubies, all of topaz, amethyst, or other precious stones. The number, exclusive of those on her hands, was one hundred and sixty-seven rings! Besides these, which give the shrine the brilliancy of a jeweller's shop, there is such a supply of pictures as creates the appearance of a picture-shop. They are votive or memorial pictures. An individual, suffering in any danger or accident, vowing to the Virgin and recovering or saved, paints some representation of the circumstances, and hangs it up to the image. The nature of some of these is very curious. There is one representing two monks in the act of being tossed by bulls. There is another representing a young lady in mid air, as if falling from an upper window of a house. There is a picture of a man drowning in the river. There is a painting of another with a horse biting him in the face, and another of a lady on the ground with a horse running over her. There is an innumerable multitude of figures representing men falling from ladders, and depicting women in their confinement, and there are chil-

dren dying in sickness, and men nearly killed by horses, without number. And as for those representing the upsetting of carriages and the breaking down of waggons and the dashing over precipices, and the burning of houses, and the wrecking of ships, with men and women rolling in the dust, flying down precipices or struggling in the waters, there is no reckoning the amount, but in all there is a little representation of a woman and child in the clouds, shewing that the Virgin had heard the prayers of her votaries—had watched over them in their dangers, and saved them by miracle; and now recovered and saved by her, the grateful votaries paint these pictures and hang them up as offerings, memorials of mercies received, to this image of the Virgin.

The learned observer, versed in the classic writers of ancient Rome, will at once recognize in all this, the worship of the heathen. It was quite impossible to look on the image with its many lamps burning around it,—the worshippers, kneeling or prostrate before it, gazing upon it and praying to it,—or the innumerable votive-offerings and thank-offerings hung around it, without remembering that all this was but the continuance or the revival of the votive-offerings suspended by the ancients in the temples of their Gods. One image may have been changed for another. The statue of Juno may have yielded her niche to the statue of Mary. The offerings made to the one, as the queen of the gods, may be made now to the other, as the queen of the saints. Names, whether of the worshippers or the worshipped, may vary: but the worship itself seems in all its essentials one and the same. It is without any apology or extenuation, as gross an idolatry as any of

which we read in antiquity ; for pagan Rome has been closely imitated in the acts of papal Rome.

But though there is no apology or extenuation for the Augustinian monks in this matter, we cannot be so much surprised at the superstitious regards of the ignorant populace. The Madonna of the Pantheon had for years been their favourite ; and to it were all the offerings of the people made ; but the monks of St. Augustine got up some well-managed miracles at the image in their church ; and the populace, imagining that the Virgin Mary transferred her favour to the worshippers of that image, very naturally followed her capricious favours. The Madonna of the Pantheon is now totally deserted, and the Madonna of the Augustinians is thronged with votaries. I have sometimes been in doubt, whether my indignation at the wickedness of the monks, in promoting such idolatry, was not too much suppressed in my merriment at the ingenious drolery of the trick by which they transferred to themselves such a treasury of wealth. Among other illustrations of their adroitness, is the history of the splendid tiara of diamonds that surmounts the head of the image. It was presented by a lady while in a state of insanity. As they were the family jewels, which she had no power to dispose of, they were claimed by her family, but the monks could not possibly think of returning them, unless with the consent of the pious donor herself. They accordingly retained them till the lady was restored to her senses ; when being shocked at what she had done, she at once reclaimed the jewels of her family ; but the worthy monks protested, that however willing they might be to restore the jewels, yet, as they had been presented, not to them, but to the blessed Virgin, it was impossible for them to interfere un-

less she consented. The image has never spoken on the subject, and therefore the jewels still remain on her brow!

III. A third image is that of our Lord himself. It stands near the high altar of the church of S. Maria Sopra Minerva. This image is valuable as a work of art, and no less remarkable for its religious history.

It was the production of the masterly chisel of Michael Angelo, whose mighty mind seemed to excel alike in the triumphs of architecture, of painting, and of sculpture. Whatever may be the artistical skill of his many and great productions, and however wonderful his grand imagination undoubtedly was, he seems to have failed in some most important particulars. There is nothing of the character of Moses in his image of that meekest of men. There is still less of the godlike, or the holy, in this image of our Lord. And no one—as it seems to me—can look on his celebrated “Last Judgment,” without being shocked at its representing our Lord as a furious and savage Hercules—as a ferocious gladiator, with face, and arms, and attitude, all wrath and fury, as the impersonation of the wrath of God; while the Virgin Mary, all sweetness, gentleness, and love, seems to express pain at the sight of his vengeance, after endeavouring to pacify his wrath, and obtain mercy for the sinners. I have never looked on that celebrated fresco without pain—a pain that was not counterbalanced by the power of the artist in the general design. In this image of our Lord, however, the fault is of a different kind, as it is characterised by the absence of all that is great, noble, beautiful or good. It is wholly without expression.

Its history is remarkable. It had for years been the favourite of Rome, and ten thousand times ten thousand

pilgrims of every land paid their worship before it. Its foot was so kissed, that as the marble wore away, it was replaced by brass; and this again has been so kissed, that it too has been worn away, and it was necessary to cover the brass toes with an additional plate of brass. But now all has changed; it has ceased to be the favoured idol of the people. No pilgrims from other lands make pilgrimage to it; no worshippers of Italy now worship at its shrine; no votaries of Rome present their offerings in its temple. There it stands in solitude, neglected and forgotten! The religion of Rome, however much corrupted, had still some love for the name of Jesus, and shewed some regard for the image of Jesus; and while this continued, the worship of this image continued; but later years have thrown a dark shadow over that holy name. The worship of Mary has become predominant; it is absorbing all else. Her pictures—her images—her worship—her patronage—her intercession—her churches—her convents, are all preferred to aught else; and the image of Mary of the Augustinians has absorbed the image of Jesus at the Sopra Minerva. As the serpent-rod of Aaron swallowed all the serpent-rods of the Magicians, so the modern devotion for Mary has absorbed all the offerings, prayers, and devotion for Jesus; so that this image, once an idol, is now an idol no more!

IV. The fourth image—the Bambino—is said to be miraculous, in both senses. First as being of miraculous origin; and secondly as being possessed of miraculous powers. Its nature or its worship need not be detailed here, as they have been already full described.

The art of sculpture has been generally regarded as a heathen, rather than a Christian art. At all events there

can be no question, that the images of the heathen gods are incomparably superior to the images of the Christian Saints. If the Apollo Belvidere and the Saviour by Angelo were placed together, most worshippers of beauty would bow before the Apollo, and desert the Saviour. But with painting it is far otherwise, especially as all the finest specimens of the art are connected with the Christian religion—connected, it may be, also with the errors and corruptions that have marred it, but still more or less associated also with Christianity. And it seems to me that it is to this we are to ascribe the fact, that while a love of painting has led some enthusiastic admirers of the art into the Church of Rome, a love of sculpture has never had a similar effect. If we are to join the Church of Rome, as being that which inspired the artists in the production of the finest painting, then we may join ourselves to the classic heathens, whose system inspired the artists in the noblest works of sculpture in the world. The inspiration that produced the Apollo Belvidere, was fully equal to that which produced the Madonna of Raffaele.

The people of Italy, however, are not much influenced by a taste for the arts, in their religion; for not unfrequently they select the very ugliest Madonnas, and the most hideous crucifixions, as the objects of their worship. Their predilection for a black Madonna is universally known, probably from a belief of its greater antiquity, and superior sanctity. And a story of some well-managed miracle, or an expectation of some unusual indulgence, will be found to do more towards increasing the number of devout pilgrims and pious worshippers, than the most exquisite handling of the pencil, or the most perfect finishing of the chisel. A taste and a love for the arts, may

induce men to place paintings of a superior class in their churches, or images of a better kind at the corners of their streets; and all this may propagate a knowledge and a taste for the art: but certainly it has not the least effect upon the kind or degree of worship, which the masses of the population are disposed to render to them.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

TERMINATION OF OUR PILGRIMAGE—THE IMPRESSIONS CREATED BY IT
—ROMANISM VIEWED AS AN ECLECTIC RELIGION—THE CLASSIC MY-
THOLOGY ORIGINATING ITS SAINTS AND IMAGES—JUDAISM ORIGINATING ITS PRIESTHOOD, AND ITS CEREMONIES AND SYMBOLS—ORIENTALISM ORIGINATING ITS ASCETISM, CELIBACY, AND MONASTICISM—
AN ECLECTIC AND CATHOLIC SYSTEM.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.



Our
pilgrimage
was now ended.

We quitted Rome for NAPLES, after a sojourn of five months ;

expected, that all who looked for advancement in the state ; and all who sought favour at court, would profess a similar conversion, and observe an outward conformity to Christianity. It was no more than might be expected, that the clergy would avail themselves of this, and endeavour to extend a universal profession of Christianity, even among those who knew nothing of its nature, in the hope and belief that such profession would prove a means of bringing them, or at least their children, under the instructions of Christianity. The records that have come down from those times, give ample evidence of this. The masses of the people, under the sanction of the court and the church, professed an outward Christianity without any knowledge or love of its nature, while they preserved their former mythology in their customs and affections. They worshipped Christ in their churches, and their gods in their homes.

In this state of things a little toleration was deemed wise and necessary, and a little compromise of principle was regarded as prudent and expedient. The masses of the people were willing enough to acknowledge and worship the divinity of the new religion—the religion of the court and of the church ; in short, to acknowledge and worship the God of Christianity ; but they were not so willing to abandon the gods of their fathers—the religion of their homes and their affections. The remedy proposed for this state of things, was a remedy congenial to the spirit of the times : and however it may now be regarded as an abandonment of Christian principle, it still originated in the best intentions, and with the best hopes of its leading to the extinction of heathen idolatry in the triumph of Christian worship. The remedy was a toleration of the

customs and feelings of the people ; a toleration of the old heathen demi-gods, under the new name of Christian Saints ; a toleration of the old worship of images as representing heathen demi-gods, under the new phase of images as representing Christian Saints ; and thus in due time, instead of worshipping Jupiter, they worshipped St. Peter ; instead of praying to Juno the Queen of Heaven among the Heathens, they prayed to the Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven among the Christians. Apollo and a train of demi-gods gave place to St. Paul and a train of Saints ; Minerva and Venus and others yielded place to St. Helena, Magdalene and others. And not unfrequently the old demi-gods were transformed into Saints ; so that Romulus and Remus are now worshipped as St. Romulo and St. Remigio. I have myself witnessed this, and I was gravely told that they were two holy bishops and saints of the church !

This toleration and compromise, originating in the natural and very laudable desire to extend the Christian profession, proved the means of adulterating Christianity, by importing heathenism into the church. It was the fruitful source, from which issued a large portion of the evils and corruptions that now defile the Church of Rome. Her invocation of saints, her worship of images and pictures, her pomps and ceremonies, and all her priestly vestments, have had their birth in a system, which has but changed the name, but not the nature, of the old religion. The things that were worshipped in pagan times under one name, are now in Christian times worshipped under another. The nymphs and naiads of the groves and the fountains, have received the names of saints, male and female, as presiding spirits and guardian saints ; and the Lares or

household images have been exchanged for those of the cross and the Virgin. The Heroes once worshipped as the benefactors of mankind, are now canonized as the ornaments of the church. And the very images that once were adored as those of heathen sages, are now worshipped as those of Christian saints. The name of Paganism has faded before the name of Christianity; the names are changed; but the religion—the worship—is essentially the same.

No man, possessed of ordinary information as to the mythology of classic times, can fail to notice, in the religion of Italy, that this phase of that mythology, at least this item of the old religion, forms a large element in the present system of the Church of Rome.

The next element is one derived from the peculiarities of Judaism. Of this, the grand and leading feature is,—Symbolism. It pervaded every part of the whole system; the people were a type, the land was a type, Jerusalem was a type, the tabernacle was a type, the temple was a type, the priesthood was a type; all the sacrifices, incense, washings, ceremonies were types. Their very history was a series or chain of types;—symbolism is graven upon all. Whether the same system had characterized the religion of Egypt in the time of Moses, is of no importance, inasmuch as God adopted this method of teaching, and made it the grand feature of the revelation then communicated to the people of Israel. All was designed to shadow forth the future purposes of God, in the Messiah and in the Church of the Messiah; and therefore all the priesthood, the altars, the sacrifices, the incense, and all else that pointed to the work of the Messiah on earth, were fulfilled in him and were to cease with him. And all the services of the

tabernacle and of the temple, were to cease with the establishing of the church of the Messiah. They were types that had shadowed the church, and the substance being now come, they were, in the nature of things, to cease ; and they have ceased, and the Epistle to the Hebrews has declared their cessation as a certain truth of our Christianity.

But the system has been revived in the Church of Rome, not indeed by creating new symbols or by symbolizing new truths ; but by continuing old and effete things ; by adopting and perpetuating the cast-off and dead symbols of a fulfilled and vanished revelation ; in short, by adopting Judaism, and grafting it upon her Christianity, so as to make her Christianity approach as near as possible to the semblance of Judaism. The number of Jews who joined themselves to Christianity in the second century, was very great ; and they naturally carried with them these great peculiarities of their former system, which were graven on their minds and interwoven with their affections, even from childhood. They could not easily wrench away these, which clung as with fibres to their hearts, and cast them from them ; and even when their judgment rejected them, they still maintained a hold on their feelings and affections, and gave a Jewish colour to all their religion, as we see this day in all our proselytes from Judaism. The result was, that many things essentially Christian, assumed a form and feature essentially Jewish. The whole system and order of the ministry took this complexion, and levites and priests and high-priests, were succeeded by deacons and priests and bishops : and a claim to privileges and to authority, and a power of absolving ; in short, all things analogous to the claims, pretensions and powers of the Jewish

priesthood, followed in their train ; and then the idea of altars, and of sacrifices, and of incense, and of washing was adopted ; and as Jews had altars of sacrifice, so must Christians ; and as Jews had a continual sacrifice, so must Christians ; and thus the altars, the masses, the incensings, the holy-water, and a long train of ceremonies, were introduced and gradually adopted, and incorporated into the system ; so that the religion of the Church of Rome at the present day, is as replete with symbolical rites and significant forms and emblematic ceremonies, as were the ceremonial departments of Judaism in the age of symbolism. In her service of the mass, in her ordination of priests, in her baptism and confirmation, in her consecration and conjuration of water, in her whole system at the present day, she has departed altogether from the simplicity of the New Testament, and reverted to the complicated symbolism of the Old Testament ; forsaking the simplicity of Christianity for the symbolical ceremonials of Judaism.

Intimately connected with this ceremonial system, is another source of many errors of a totally different kind. Among the Jews the notion was prevalent, that all true righteousness arose from a close and rigid observance of a ceremonial and ritual service ; that each observance added to their merits, and that thus they could save themselves by a round of ceremonial observances. The doctrine of self-righteousness, or human merits, was the result ; and when these persons embraced Christianity, they very frequently carried this doctrine with them. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles of St. Paul, that this evil was rife from the very beginning,—that Jewish persons, or persons of Jewish tendencies, were zealously propagating it ; that these Judaizing Christians had found

a welcome at Galatia, at Antioch, at Rome ; that they were destroying the simplicity of the gospel ; that they were overthrowing the very foundations of Christianity. And two of the inspired epistles were written for the express purpose of confuting the doctrine—that men could be made righteous by ceremonial observances, or could be justified by any works of righteousness, that it was in the power of man under any circumstances to perform.

But, notwithstanding all this—notwithstanding that this doctrine of human merit and human righteousness was a corruption and off-shoot of Judaism—notwithstanding that it was the first disturbing cause in the infancy of the church—notwithstanding its being the early spring from which flowed innumerable corruptions of Christianity ; and notwithstanding its having been stricken down by all the authority of inspiration, of the church, of the apostles ; still, as it was dear and congenial to the hearts and prejudices of the Jewish proselytes to Christianity—and to the natural heart of fallen man ; and as it agreed well with the ceremonial and ritual system of the church of Rome, she adopted it and incorporated it into her system. And therefore we see there the same doctrine of human merit—of self-righteousness—the same doctrine of the merit of ceremonial acts, and of the righteousness that may be acquired by particular observances. And then the notion of the merits of saints—of a treasury of merits in the church—of indulgences arising from these—of a host of kindred doctrines, and of practices connected with them, was adopted and incorporated in the church of Rome, thus giving to that church a character as Jewish as it is Christian.

Those who have closely studied the Jewish system, will

readily detect its traces in many other parts of the Roman system. Indeed, not a few of the rites and ceremonies are avowedly so derived; and therefore in our view of the present state of the church of Rome, we are compelled to acknowledge that Judaism is no inconsiderable element in its composition.

Another large element will be found in what, through want of a better term, may be called—Orientalism.

In the early ages of Christianity, the peculiarities of the Oriental philosophy proved always a chief source of error.

In that system it was held, that there were two elements, or principles, or divinities, pervading the universe—the spirit of evil and the spirit of good. These came practically to be regarded as two original, self-existing and independent gods. One was the author and creator of good or light, and the other the author or creator of evil or darkness. These gods of good and of evil—these gods of light and of darkness, were supposed to maintain a constant conflict for the mastery over man and over the world. It was also held in this system, that the Evil Spirit had his kingdom generally in the fleshly part, in the carnal nature of man; while the Good Spirit was supposed to exert his influence and his empire on the mind and spiritual part of man. And thus the conflict between these rival and hostile gods, however and wherever carried on, beyond human vision, amidst invisible creations, was also waged in the life and person of a man. Man became the battle-field—the tented lists for these champions to contest in everlasting conflict. And the appeal which the sages of this philosophy made to the sons of men, when they would exhort them to holiness, was to fling themselves in the strife into the ranks of the Spirit of Good, to excite their minds and

spirits to a mightier effort to overcome their fleshly nature. And as the Spirit of Evil was supposed to have created the fleshly part of man with all its fleshly and grovelling tendencies ; and as he was supposed also to have created this, our present world, in which we live and move, and which presents so many affinities to our fleshly nature, so the grand aim of man should be, to vex, harass, subdue his flesh—to curb, and stifle his passions—to restrain and annihilate his feelings and affections, as all belonging to that fleshly nature which was the empire or the dominion of the Spirit of Evil, and which acted as a clog or hindrance restraining the soarings of the spirit. And yet further, that the aim of man ought to be, to overcome the world—to withdraw from its temptations, its pleasures, its customs, as so many enemies, and to retire from all contact with, and renounce all compliance with, and subjection to it, as being the work, the creation, the empire of the Spirit of Evil.

These principles, so long and widely received among the inhabitants of the East, were carried out to their full extent ; and as the natural result of the system, the men who aimed at a higher degree of holiness, and a loftier tone of wisdom—withdrew from all contact with the world, retired to lonely places, and lived as anchorites. And there, renouncing marriage as one of the worst compliances with the fleshly nature, they lived in a state of solitude, starving, reducing, torturing the body, in order by such means to bring it into subjection to the Spirit of Good. All who are acquainted with the past history and present state of the East, are familiar with the practical results of this system ; as these self-punishing anchorites and saints,

regarding their sanctity as measured by their austerities, are even to this day almost as numerous as ever.

The rapidity with which Christianity was preached and professed in the East, was truly miraculous. The traces of its prevalence everywhere remain, notwithstanding the terrible convulsions and revolutions that have changed, not merely the institutions, the religions, but even the races of the inhabitants. But before these frightful disasters, by which the lights—the candlesticks of so many churches, were quenched and destroyed by the scimitar of the Saracen, and before the Bible was supplanted by the Koran, there was an influx of a whole ocean of evils, endangering the purity of Christian truth by the orientalisms of the Gnostics, the Manichees, and others, whose opinions and practices were essentially those already described. The churches of the East, to a prodigious extent, became infected with some of the worst elements of Orientalism.

It could not be that the churches of Africa or of the west should altogether escape the infection. And as many opinions, and many practices, were gradually introduced from the East, so in process of time they were found to propagate and take root extensively. It was from all this, that the church of Rome originally derived the whole system of the monastic life. It was introduced from the East; and very soon throughout Africa and Europe the hermits and the anchorites almost rivalled in numbers, the hives of the East; and solitude and contemplation remote from the haunts of men, became regarded as the surest pathway to the attainment of holiness. And these rigid austerities, severe penances, bodily mortifications, became regarded as acts that tended to keep down the fleshly nature—to kill and crucify as it were, the fleshly part of

man, and to exalt and spiritualize the immortal nature ; and thus from being at first esteemed useful, they became afterwards regarded as meritorious, and as greatly conducive to the salvation of man. And soon, when it was found that some men bore not only these ordinary privations and austerities of a hermit or anchorite existence, but were able to endure flagellation, self-torture, and other more frightful inflictions, it became looked on as a degree of merit so great, as to be more than sufficient for salvation ; and then as a work of supererogation, capable of being transferred for the benefit of others. And the principle once being permitted to take root, that the flesh must be subdued and deprived of its natural desires, the eastern notion of the unholiness of marriage found entrance into the church, and multitudes embraced the opinion, that a state of marriage was less holy than a state of celibacy ; and thus one peculiarity after another in the system of the East, found its way into the churches of the West, and opinions unknown to primitive Christianity—opinions of the merit of solitary lives, of fleshly austerities, of the unholiness of marriage,—in other words, opinions favourable to monastic institutions, to bodily penances and voluntary sufferings, became rife ; so that no man, scrutinizing the Romanism of the present day, can fail to recognise Orientalism as having entered largely into its composition.

These three systems—namely the old classical mythology of Greece, Etruria, and Rome,—the ancient and symbolical dispensation of the Jews,—and the principles of the philosophy prevalent in the East—were the great and prevalent systems of the Roman empire, and became more or less integral elements of the new religion embraced by that empire. Christianity was assumed as the basis of all, and

portions of these several systems were grafted upon that Christianity. They were absorbed into it, and soon worked pliantly with it, altering themselves in some particulars so as to work well with Christianity, and altering Christianity so as to work well with them. And the result of the working of all these elements—whether by a clumsy welding of the materials together, or by perfect fusion of the whole, is the system of Romanism.

I have no desire, as God, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, is my witness, to write one word of injustice, or to cherish one feeling of unkindness, against the members of the church of Rome. Whatever were the causes that operated, or the motives which, in centuries past, influenced in the production of such a result, the members of the church of Rome at the present day are in no degree answerable for it. There are those who, forming their judgments on the maxims of this world's wisdom, and considering what is expedient, rather than what is revealed, have regarded this system of Romanism as one of the profoundest worldly wisdom and political expediency. They beheld a vast population, wholly given to the fables and images and hero-worship of an ancient and classic mythology; and by yielding to their prejudices and winking at their practices, they induced them to embrace the profession of Christianity, in the hope, no doubt, of being able subsequently, and in the lapse of years, to wean them altogether from their ancient errors. They beheld also a large proportion of their own body, influenced by the prejudices and principles of the elder dispensation. And as Christianity was based on that revelation, or rather was the full development of its symbols, and as the larger portion of the church's records—the words of inspiration—were the re-

cords of that former revelation, so they felt that it might not be doing any violence to Christianity, and might even subserve its advancement, to adopt and graft upon it so much of the ordinances of that dispensation, as might give a sanction to the ceremonies, and throw the air of Divine authority over the priesthood of Christianity. And yet further, as they cast their eyes over the East, and beheld the masses of men who professed Christianity, but explained it in accordance with their oriental philosophy, and held it along with the mystical and ascetic spirit, in which all their notions of higher and loftier degrees of holiness consisted, they seem to have thought it wise to avail themselves of the possibility of thus holding the two systems, and so to introduce the profession of Christianity. The church of Rome seems thus to have adapted herself as far as possible, to the customs and opinions of every nation—to have availed herself of their prejudices—to have turned their customs and prejudices to account—and thus to have succeeded in securing a very general acceptance. And this she has done, we may believe, not with a view to an intentional corruption of revealed truth, but with the full expectation that these prejudices on one hand, and these compliances on the other, would fade and vanish away in the lapse of years, and leave revealed truth in all its beauty and integrity untouched. But all this, which was acting merely on the principles of the wisdom of this world, was laid hold of by that malignant and subtle Spirit, who is called “the God of this world,” and he has now bound these falsehoods of antiquity around every pillar and arch of the church of Rome, and has claimed for them a fresh sanction in the duration of their existence.

It was in this light that the church of Rome was pre-

sented to my mind, when viewing her churches, her ceremonies, and the superstitions and customs of her people. There are some, whose reading has been principally in the works of the ancients, and they seem to look on our modern Romanism as no other than a Christianized mythology. There are others, whose knowledge of the symbolical details of the Jewish ordinances is more than ordinary, and they not unfrequently regard our present Romanism as a sort of modified Judaism. And others still, who have watched the ascetism and superstitions of the East, look on modern Romanism as no more than a new phase of the system of the East. Men will always see things in the peculiar colour of their own mind, and each fixes on that particular in Romanism, which lays hold on his own prevailing idea. It may be thus—it probably is thus with myself; but the impression left on my mind from all I saw and heard, was, that the system is an eclectic system—that it is composed of portions of many systems, absorbed into and incorporated with Christianity, so as to deserve, though in a sense widely different from that in which it is assumed, the designation of a Catholic system, which ceases to be CHRISTIAN in exact proportion as it is CATHOLIC.

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